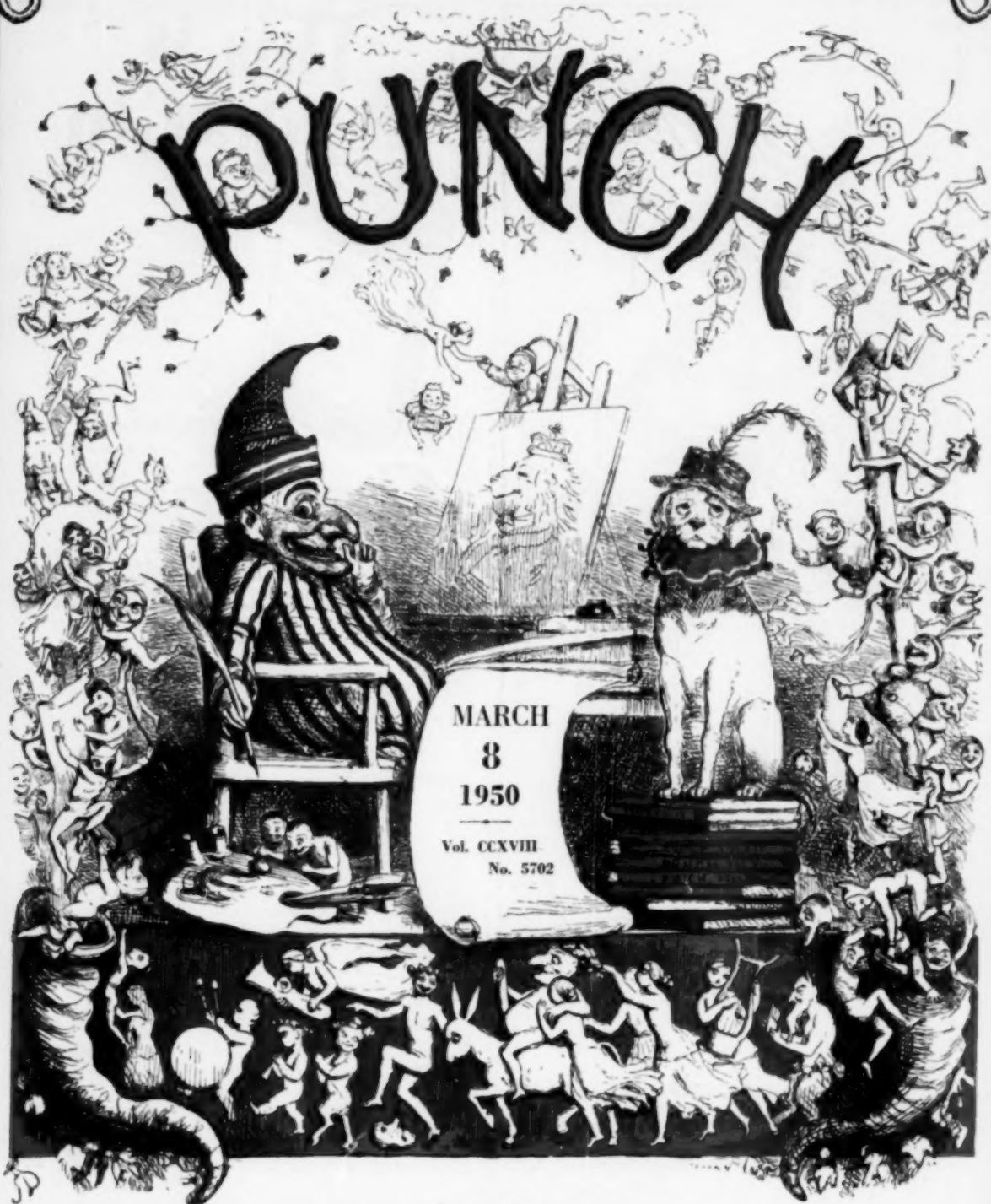


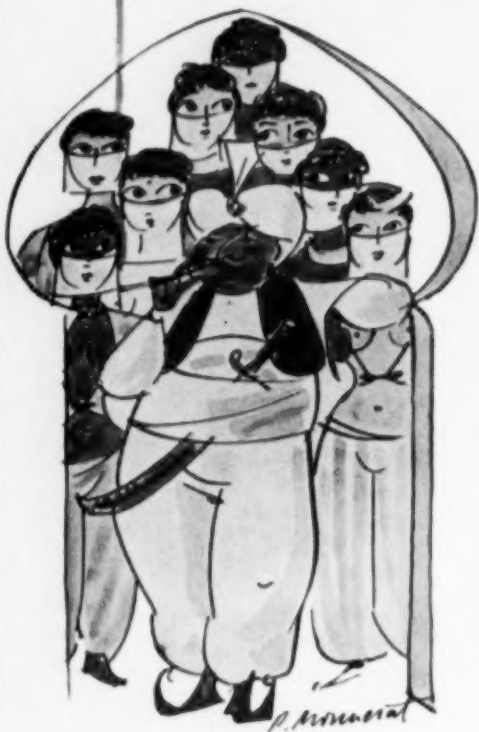
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PUNCH OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI—WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8 1950

6<sup>d</sup>

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*and a 7 too!*

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Complete range  
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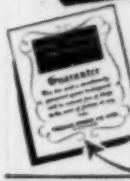
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EVERY VULCAN ADJUSTABLE  
DOOR carries the economy  
guarantee against breakage.

VULCAN STOVE CO. LTD  
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What are  
**Your Chances**  
Tonight?



MUCH depends on the quality of your sleep. If it is troubled and restless you may awake in the morning just as tired as when you went to bed. On the other hand, really restful sleep restores, revitalizes and refreshes.

Why not enjoy really restful sleep every night? A bedtime cup of delicious 'Ovaltine' will prove particularly helpful. It acts in an entirely natural way, being completely free from drugs. Its special form of nourishment—derived from Nature's best food—has a soothing influence on body and mind, aids relaxation, and quickly makes you receptive to peaceful sleep.

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Your dream at last realised. The GOBLIN TEASMADE brings you a fourfold service. It automatically wakes you up, lights the room and makes the tea which you can then enjoy, and it tells you THE CORRECT TIME. Price £15 4s. 9d. (P.T. Paid). (Crochery not included.) Supplied without tray, £13 13s. 8d. (P.T. Paid).

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- ★ Wakes you Up
- ★ Tells the Time



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porch light?

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THE SILENT SERVANT IN THE HOME



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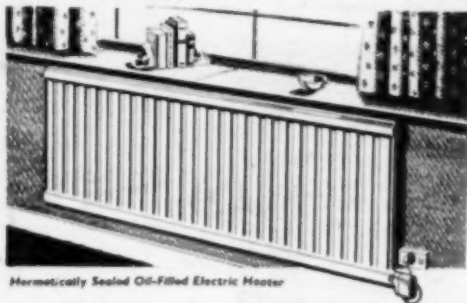
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night's sleep  
I've ever  
had!

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OUR GALLIC FRIEND's enthusiasm is pardonable. The continuous-burning Aga serves its owner like a living thing; a tireless domestic help that is never off duty for it never goes out. Besides cooking all meals to delight an epicure, the Aga gives sufficient hot water for three baths a day and all other household purposes!

MERVEILLEUX! And all this for a fuel bill of 1/- or less a day. Indeed, the Aga is so economical in fuel that it finally saves what it cost. The smokeless, fumeless Aga keeps the kitchen immaculate — and a haven of comfort night and day. Why not enjoy these advantages as so many thousands do who have already made Aga their obedient servant? Talk the Aga over with your family.

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AND WATER HEATERS

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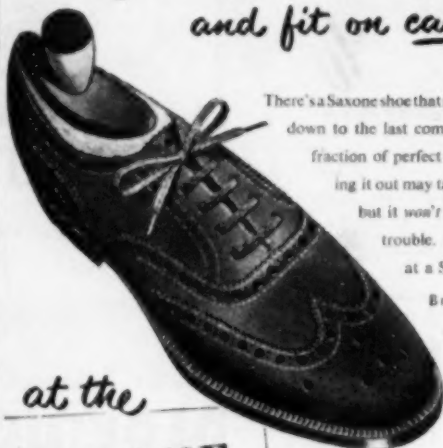
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Y'mean you like  
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**Cellarer's**  
*Special*  
**AUSTRALIAN BROWN SHERRY**  
15/- A BOTTLE FROM ALL WINE MERCHANTS

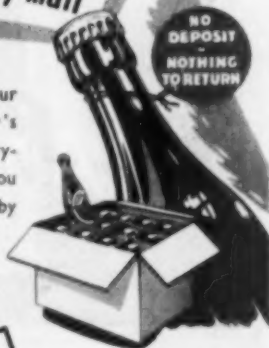


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We know you realise that the restriction on home deliveries is due to Government direction, arising from the necessity to earn foreign currency, and in this regard there may be some comfort in the fact that Austin are the largest producers and exporters in Britain to-day.

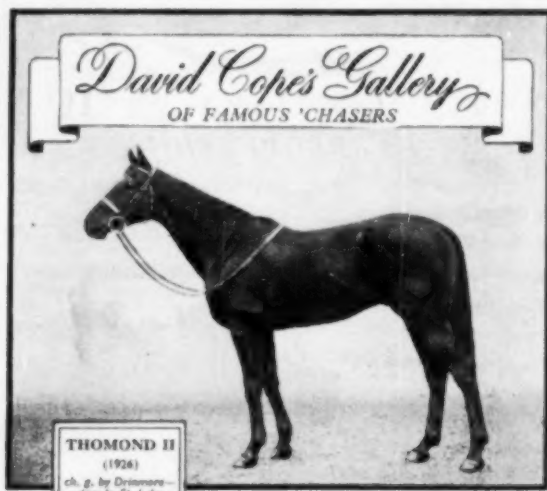


THE AUSTIN MOTOR CO. LTD • LONGBRIDGE • BIRMINGHAM



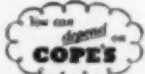
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Thomond II was one of the few serious rivals of his great contemporary, Golden Miller. He was third in 1934 and 1935 in the Grand National and second in the Cheltenham Gold Cup in 1933 and 1935. Thomond II ran in 31 top class 'chases'. He was unplaced in four of them, third in four, second in four more. The other nineteen he won. They included three Becher 'Chases' (one with a loose saddle) and two Gamecock 'Chases'.

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The English Hotel in the Mediterranean Manner

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THREE STAR  
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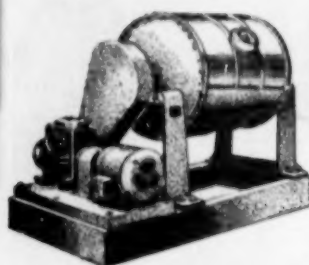
It would be idle to suggest that our scientists "nose" a sample of REGENT with quite the same ecstasy they reserve for the bouquet of a fine brandy, but they do test its aroma as a final refinement and as an important part of a whole series of refining tests designed to safeguard the quality and performance of this fine petrol. Incredible as it seems, the petrol scientist's nose may be as discerning as that of his brother, the brandy taster, in this, just one of the many tests which will safeguard quality and performance when REGENT branded petrol is once more available.

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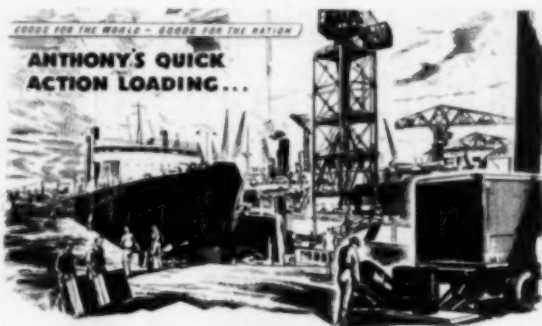
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At dock or factory, goods yard or warehouse, the Anthony Tailboard Loader goes into swift yet gentle action. By reducing the risk of breakages, lowering costs and increasing deliveries, it plays a vital part in speeding the flow of goods to home and world-wide destinations. At the touch of a lever the tailboard loader smoothly lifts up to 18 cwt. from ground to truck-floor level. Write for illustrated brochure and details of demonstration facilities.

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- 1 Light, strong magnesium alloy tailboard lifts loads up to 18 cwt. No chains to hamper loading.
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THE

# Eagle

Punch, March 8 1950

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ON the road, as in the air, the Eagle is unchallenged. The Goodyear Eagle, mighty in strength and endurance, incomparable in appearance, is without doubt the tyre-building achievement of the age. Every technical advance of recent years is featured in this outstanding tyre. Deeper, tougher tread rubber provides impressive extra mileage. New improved All-Weather Tread

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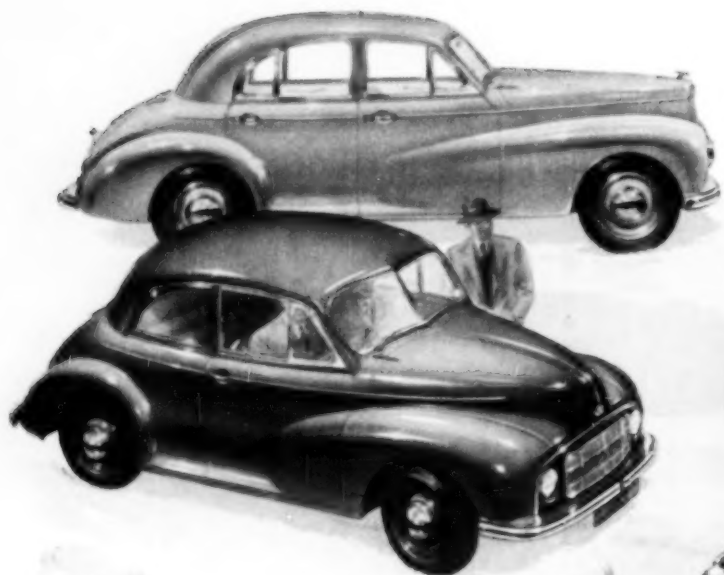
The Eagle Tyre by Goodyear, the ultimate in car tyre quality, is also the greatest car tyre value ever offered to the motoring world. Truly, it is the Long-Life Hardest-Wearing Tyre.

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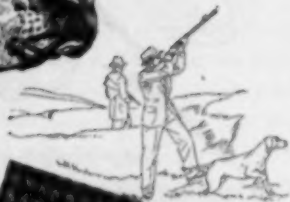
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# WHITBREAD IN ENGLISH HISTORY



Of conversation among the population of London in 1787 a favourite topic was the wondrous new mechanical devices installed in Mr. Whitbread's Brewery in Chiswell Street. These accounts eventually reached the ears of King George III who expressed a wish to see those things for himself. One Saturday morning he duly arrived with his Queen and three little Princesses and spent two hours going over the Brewery. When the crowd which had gathered outside caught sight of the King "they gave breath to their loyalty and repeatedly huzzared."

Estd 1768

# WHITBREAD

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## CHARIVARIA

ACCORDING to *East Europe* a hundred and thirty-two new "People's Universities" have been set up in Poland with the object of "providing happiness for the workers," by teaching them Marx-Leninism on Sundays and holidays. Evidently it is high time to strengthen the campaign to keep the Continental Sunday out of England.

A convicted "welsheer" at a greyhound racing track was handed back one pound of the money which was found on him. This, it was explained, was for his running expenses.

"Because there is so little drunkenness at Epping, the council is backing an application for licensed premises to serve drinks until 10.30 p.m."—*"Daily Mail"*  
That might help, certainly.

After some considerable delay *No Orchids for Miss Blandish* is to be shown at a New York cinema. The hitch was apparently due to a doubt whether American audiences would appreciate the typically English atmosphere.

We understand that in future child stars making films in this country will not be allowed to watch the shooting of sequences in which they do not appear in case the completed picture is only granted an "A" certificate.

An evening paper assures us that there cannot possibly be another General Election for several months. This disposes of the B.B.C.'s hope of using a recording.



A turf correspondent hopes that there will be no more horse doping this season. Flat-racing must be on the level.

"Big Angus McLean, a true son of Wales. . . ."—*"Sunday Express"*  
Welsh wha hao . . .

"In a minor degree, varying political faiths are held within the ranks of each of the main parties," says a writer. During the coming session the Whips of both sides will sternly check any tendency to go over to the policy of the Irish Nationalists.



## The Little-known Volcanoes of Panama

"With the publication in 1948 of his *All About H. Hatter*, G. V. Desani burst on the literary scene like 'a peak in Dorset.'"  
*Publisher's blurb*



If the great powers won't drop the hydrogen bomb now the problem remains how to prevent their doing it later.

## FOR THE NEWS EDITOR—CONFIDENTIAL

Ward 19

I AM being blamed for being late with my account of the goings-on in Downing Street on February 28. They are saying in the reporters' room, so Fred tells me, that even the quarterlies scooped us on the story. That's as it may be, but what can I do when Sister has only let me have my notebook back to-day? And these are the facts, sir, which is more than can be said for all that stuff the evenings and dailies put out.

9 a.m. or thereabouts. I went along, as instructed, with my notebook and stop-watch, but was unable to get within thirty yards of Downing Street on account of the crowd. At 9.15, hearing a cheer, I put up my periscope and found myself looking into the crown of a man's hat. It was dented and had dust in the bowl—not excessive, but some. This was getting me nowhere, so I lowered my periscope and with a cry of "Press!" tried to work my way through to the front. However, it turned out that the crowd were all reporters too, and I sustained bruises. To pass the time I wrote a piece in my notebook about public interest in the Prime Minister's Cabinet plans and jotted down the phrase "steady stream of callers" for further use.

10 a.m. Mr. Morrison came by, so they said, but suspecting a trap I raised my periscope again, and took the opportunity to tell the man in front about the state of his hat. He took it off, starting a rumour that Royalty had arrived, and giving me a momentary glimpse of Mr. Bevan.



I thought he looked in sombre mood, but do not use that if it is contrary to the policy of the paper. It was only a momentary glimpse.

10.15. Two men in bowler hats arrived, followed after a short interval by a very large car flying the Union Jack and escorted by police motor-cyclists. Misled by the storm of cheering many thought Mr. Clement Davies had agreed to join the Government, and the man in front of me doubled off to a telephone-kiosk (ATTLEE BOMBHELL FORECAST.—Lunch Editions). This enabled me to see that the new arrival was more like Groucho Marx, so I wrote down "Surprise Cabinet Changes Expected," and started my stop-watch as well, to be on the safe side. However, Groucho, if such it was, went into a building on the opposite side to No. 10 and left again eleven minutes later. No other reporter, to the best of my belief, sir, made a note of this time.

10.34. Two peaked caps and a feather went by together in a closed car, and seeing a rat of a man from the *Echo* put down "Dr. Summer-skill for the Admiralty?" on his pad I sickened of this hypocrisy and slipped off to my club to change. Ten minutes later, wearing dark glasses and a small grey moustache, I was heading again for Downing Street.

10.50. We had a hard job of it, getting through. Several newspapermen mounted the steps of my cab, and one, more daring than the rest, gained a momentary footing inside and actually attempted to read my name from the tailor's tab on the inside breast pocket of my suit. But I beat him off with my umbrella and left them all guessing (cf. "BACK BESCHER AT No. 10," in several evening papers of that date).

10.52. Inside No. 10. Lord Pakenham, Viscount Hall, Mr. McNeil and Mr. Glenvil Hall were coming out, and Mr. Ness Edwards, Mr. Stokes, Mr. Henderson and Mr. Paling were going in as I arrived, so I had no difficulty in gaining admittance. The butler, who was carrying

eight coats, had just handed Viscount Hall's umbrella to Mr. Stokes, and in the ensuing skirmish I passed unobserved into the hall.

10.53. A babel of talk and the clink of glasses drew me down a passage to the right, and through a half-open door I distinctly heard Mr. Attlee say "Same again, Tom?" and a voice (no doubt that of Mr. Williams) reply "Thanks," or words to that effect. With the Ministry of Agriculture settled, the Prime Minister next offered Madeira to Mr. Griffiths, an appointment that appears subsequently to have been cancelled, after which somebody (I think Mr. Morrison) shouted "Time two or three more of you went out, to keep them happy," and there were good-natured cries of "Go on, Bob—your turn," "Harry's only had five minutes," and so forth. Somebody said "Why not nip out the back way, Ernie, and come in again later? That'll fox them," a sally which was followed by a burst of laughter and some joking, the point of which I missed, at Mr. Dalton's expense. Then Mr. Attlee came out and asked me what I wanted. On the spur of the moment I said "Fuel and Power," adding, to distract his attention, "All fuel corrupts, but absolute fuel corrupts absolutely." He looked baffled, so I said "Acton—and I don't mean the Regional Petroleum Officer either."

10.55. Two policemen arrived and attempted to frog-march me through the front door. I pointed out that this would lead, at best to "Dark Horse for Home Office" reports, and at worst to fresh indictments of our security arrangements. I told them that if my case came up for trial they would be lucky to escape with less than three thousand words from Miss Rebecca West. This sobered them, and eventually they threw me over the wall into the Horse Guards.

I was driven away in a closed van, sir, to a Ministry of Health building at 11.1 a.m. precisely. I was in sombre mood.

H. F. ELLIS



### LA DOUANE CORDIALE

"And have you, M. le Président, anything to declare?"  
"I have, Monsieur—our countries' undying friendship."

## MIDDLE-AGED SIGHT

THE oculist says: your distant vision is perfect—  
He wears glasses himself, poor creature, how can  
he say!—

At the moment, I am not much concerned with the  
distance:

There is no distance in London, any way.

I want to be sure that the woman there by the post box  
Is Mrs. Green, not that tiresome old Miss Gage,  
I want to know at a glance that those pure silk  
stockings

Are really mushroom and not some sort of beige.

Delight of life was delight of the eyes in childhood,  
Clear as a blue-print each blossom, each bird on the  
tree;

Now the passers-by are as blurred as a shaken  
anaphot:

My sight was perfect—this can't have happened to me!

You can wear your glasses, they say, but except for  
reading

Glasses have always seemed a kind of disgrace;  
They look well enough, no doubt, on other people,  
But they just don't suit my particular type of face.

I wonder whether the middle aged are allergic  
To public affairs because they can't see them plain,  
And whether the vague distortion of middle-aged vision  
Affecting the eyes has also affected the brain.

I couldn't care less what they write in the national  
weeklies,  
What the broadcasters say, on the Third, at the  
B.B.C.

Though the prophets aspire to provide our dull vision  
with glasses,  
They may do well enough for the others, but not  
for me.





## LOVE'S LABOUR LOST

"THE use of a piece of paper . . . with a glutinous wash on the back, rendered adhesive by moisture, was recommended by Sir Rowland Hill as part of his scheme for uniform rates of postage in a pamphlet on Post Office reform in February 1837."

A great man. Born at Kidderminster in December 1793, he became a Knight Commander of the Bath in 1860, and dying at Hampstead in 1869, was buried in Westminster Abbey. His statue in King Edward Street is justly admired.

Nevertheless, since the day was Saturday and the year was 1950, I decided to convey my message to our New Member, who lives little more than a long iron shot away, not by post but by hand; moistening no more glutinous wash for my purposes than that which renders adhesive the flap of an ordinary envelope.

"Dear New Member," I wrote, "I hasten to convey my heartiest congratulations at once to your door."

And as I set out I mused on the tremendous triumph that he had won.

Absent-mindedness is not, as many people suppose, a defect of the unpractical temperament. It is due to the fact that great thinkers (in a world full of mechanical contrivances) consider it futile to allot more than a fraction of their minds to simple everyday operations; justly reserving nearly the whole of it for philosophy, religion, politics and art. When I put a penny down on the bookstall and ask for a ticket to South Kensington, there is not the slightest reason why the man who keeps the bookstall should smile; he should realize immediately that a brain perpetually roving in the regions of abstract thought has perhaps for only the second time in a whole week confounded one petty and trifling formality with another.

Thus it was not until I had reached the front gate of the New Member's residence that I found I had posted my letter in the pillar box at the corner. Unpaid packets I remembered (whether the idea sprang from the giant brain of Sir Rowland or that of another) are charged double on delivery. This was but a poor compliment to our member in the hour of his shining success. Eager to right the wrong, I went back and wrote to him as follows.

"Dear New Member, an awkward, if slightly amusing, contretemps has arisen. Hastening to congratulate you on your resounding victory, I was carrying a personal letter to your home, but in a moment of inadvertence, caused, I think, by the peculiar political crisis which now confronts the two great Parties, posted it without the *affiche* required by the British Revenue Authorities. I shall endeavour to waylay the postman and rectify my error; but in the meantime I am bearing this second missive containing the same message of goodwill."

With this in my hand, I proceeded once more to his house, and by a curious coincidence met him just emerging from his front door.

For a moment I was rather taken aback.

Recovering, I said, "Dear Member, an awkward if



H. Newman

slightly amusing contretemps has arisen," and proceeded to give him a brief summary of the events which I have previously narrated.

"But here," I concluded, putting my hand in my pocket, "is the written guarantee of my good faith."

Unfortunately I found that I had posted the second letter also in the pillar box at the corner.

He looked a little stern. "Do you realize," he said, "that I polled twenty-four thousand votes?"

"I know," I said, taking off my hat.

"And if every elector who voted for me was such a raging fool as you are I should have lost my first year's salary."

A rapid mental calculation convinced me that his statement was true. I handed him tenpence on the spot.

"But what a situation it is," I said to him, thinking to pass the matter off easily. "As likely as not, before the year is out, we shall all be flocking round to your gate to congratulate you on becoming Postmaster-General."

He turned pale.

EVOR

## Guarded Disclosure

"The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission yesterday disclosed that it had begun research into the use of atomic power for driving ships, submarines for submarine or ship pro land-based prototype of a thermal reactor suitable and aircraft, and that a pulsion would be in the design stage soon."—*"Irish Times."*

## MUDLARKS ON WHEELS

WE awoke the other day to the unaccustomed smell of heated oil and the explosions of maimed internal combustion engines, and for one moment thought we were back in a depressing billet we once had over an Ordnance workshop. However, the comfort of the bed and the sound of Mr. Punch's Artist carolling some motoring folk-song in the next room reminded us, rather foggily, that we were supposed to be attending the President's Trophy Trial of the Southsea Motor Club.

The Southsea Motor Club, so a young man at the R.A.C. had informed us, is one of a hundred and sixty-one such clubs in Great Britain. He added that even the secretaries of these clubs probably don't know how many members they have, but he thought an average of thirty would be the minimum. This means, in short, that at least five thousand Britons spend their week-ends trying to force their cars up inclines which the intelligent horse—let alone the intelligent man—would dismiss at a glance as better unclimbed. To this end they construct cars which have so much weight at the rear that they have been known to topple over backwards on some of the steeper slopes; they let practically every pound of air out of their tyres at the bottom of the hills and have to pump it all back at the top; and they further assist their rear wheels to grip the slippery slopes by bounding up and down while they drive as

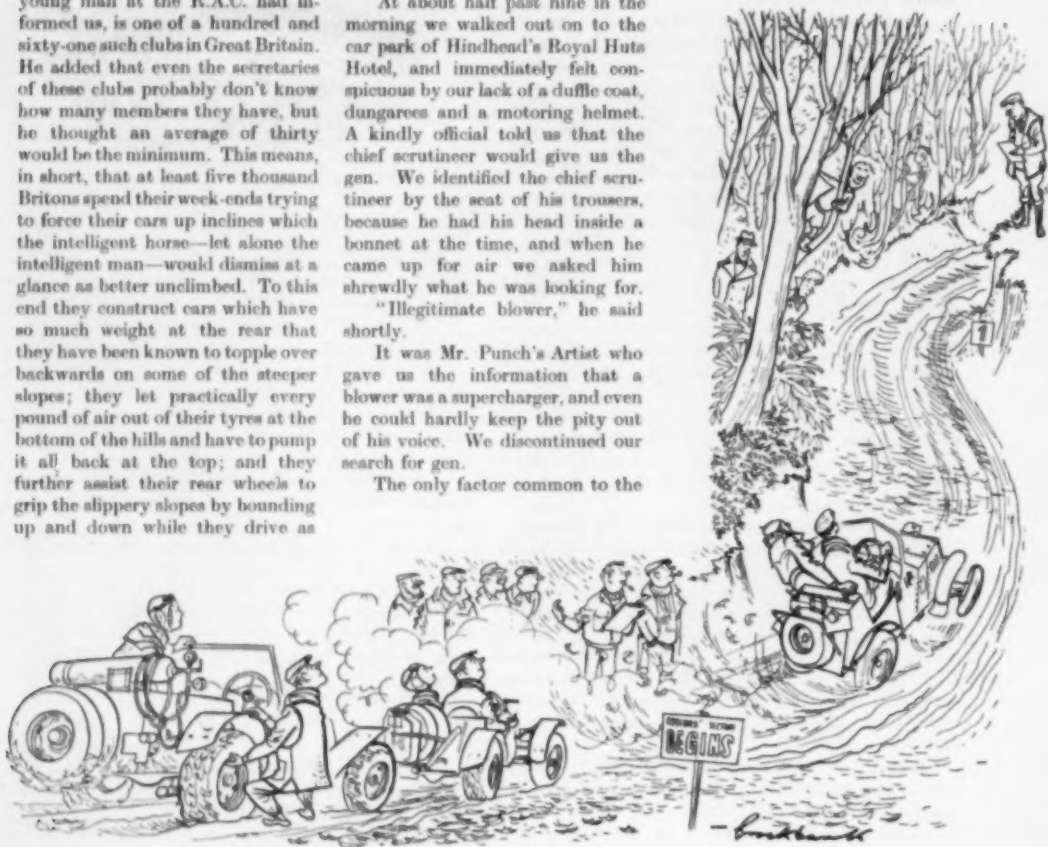
though they were urging steers into the corral. These men suffer for their sport. Yet, on the whole, they hardly look ascetic types. A plaintive letter in the Southsea Motor Club's own magazine (*Southsea Supercharge*) says "the minimum requirement to enter this post-war sport is a company director's income or a super garage." Certainly it seemed that most of the competitors we met had a rather intimate knowledge of the motor trade. When we asked, with an attempt at dewy-eyed innocence, if club members got an extra petrol allowance for their activities we were answered with a laconic "Petrol's easy, old boy, if you know where to look for it."

At about half past nine in the morning we walked out on to the car park of Hindhead's Royal Huts Hotel, and immediately felt conspicuous by our lack of a duffle coat, dungarees and a motoring helmet. A kindly official told us that the chief scrutineer would give us the gen. We identified the chief scrutineer by the seat of his trousers, because he had his head inside a bonnet at the time, and when he came up for air we asked him shrewdly what he was looking for. "Illegitimate blower," he said shortly.

It was Mr. Punch's Artist who gave us the information that a blower was a supercharger, and even he could hardly keep the pity out of his voice. We discontinued our search for gen.

The only factor common to the

cars drawn up in the park at Hindhead was that they all had four wheels. (This was a fluke. They might have had three, we were informed; or was it five?) There were Ford engines on Austin bodies, Austin engines on Ford bodies, and midget cars slung between lorry wheels. One competitor brought his trial car on a huge red trailer, drawn by a sports car almost as large. Mr. Les Bartlett, an ebullient garage proprietor whose long mane flew finely out from beneath his beret, was standing proudly by what appeared to be the coachwork of a baby's perambulator ambitiously grafted on to an eccentric Meccano frame. There was no bonnet. The car was called, rightly, a Bartlett





Special. We confirmed at once that there was only one of its kind in the world.

"They don't seemter got the right fit, Les," said Mr. Bartlett's lady passenger, who was trying the Special for leg room. At that moment she struck some protrusion sharply with her knee and nearly added a rider.

"As I see it," said Mr. Bartlett, "I got a functional design here. Not aesthetic. Just functional."

The lady passenger, struggling to get seated, inadvertently pressed the foot-brake, which in turn worked the horn.

"See what I mean," said Mr. Bartlett. "Functional."

An inquisitive and mechanically-minded investigator then discovered that the seats of the Special were actually attached to the back axle, springing being represented by two small pads of rubber. Mr. Bartlett was about to say "functional" again when the lady passenger silenced him with a look.

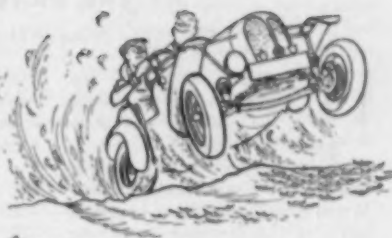
The strange convoy moved off at brief intervals towards the

first test at Fernden Hill, an ordinary North Downs mud track which the competitors all climbed with some ease, though with greatly differing styles. Four professionally accoutred gentlemen came dashing up in a huge Allard, bouncing and yelling like school-boys in a blanket, to be followed by the placid Mrs. Willis, who was able to keep a lengthy ash on her cigarette all the way. The chief hazard appeared to be a strategically placed holly branch which swiped each passenger's face as he or she came by. (Correction: one competitor did fail. He broke his back axle, a laughable error in the opinion of the onlookers.)

There was in fact little difficulty for the drivers until they came to a spot oddly named "Cow Track," an almost vertical slope covered in beech leaves, which would have spelt death to the average cow. It overturned a Mr. Best, who finished up in hospital (though not, happily, with disastrous injuries), and his car, about which the assembled officials showed much concern. For a long time the best climb was done by a young Mr. Chapman and his younger passenger, Miss Hazel Williams, who bounced up and down with great agility and elegance. Miss Williams endeared herself to us not merely by her obvious attractiveness but by the ladylike manner in which she picked lumps of mud out of the car and off her face when the climbs were over. Most competitors perforce ignored the piles of dirt that collected in and on their cars.

"Oi wouldn't like to 'aave the cleanin' of 'em," said a local onlooker thoughtfully.

Three cars eventually climbed the Cow Track, and none was seriously worried again until the final gradient at Lythe Farm. There, as the evening mists gathered over the Hampshire heights, we stood by a hairpin bend composed of pure liquid mud and studied the attempts of the competitors to master it. One by one each left his car and came forward to



Goodman

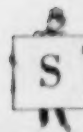
study the terrain with the set intensity of Napoleon at Waterloo or Henry Cotton faced with an eight-foot putt. One by one they dashed at the corner, showered us solidly with wet mud and, usually, stuck. With our assistance they were then started again, repeating the mud-pack treatment in the process. No one thought there was anything unusual about all this. Each driver was discomfited with calm, dispassionate criticism as we wiped the mud out of our eyes and hair and waited for the next driver to come and fling it all back again. There was a grandeur in it all that those who have never had this baptism of mire will not understand. And it was very cold.

It took a long time to add up the marks, and so announce the results, when we got back to Petersfield for tea. True, everyone present knew that one driver had miraculously got all the way round the course with a clean sheet, but the thing had to be done properly. We approved of this. No sport can survive unless proper attention is paid to the book-work and statistics. And without a due meed of solemnity and mystery the competitors might have gone away wondering why they had ever spent the day like that at all.

RAWLEY KNOX



## AT THE PICTURES

*Three Came Home—The Red Danube*

SCENES of parting and reunion seldom fail to be moving, and those in *Three Came Home* (Director: JEAN NEOU-LESCO), a version of AGNES NEWTON KEITH's book about her imprisonment by the Japanese, come over

tedium and monotony, for that would hardly be calculated to appeal to an audience; it does give a straightforward and unsensational idea of the facts, from which one can grasp by an intellectual effort what the experience must have been like. The emotional moments, as I

have suggested, are the unfaithfully effective ones involved in scenes of parting and reunion, and even the suspicion that the climax is over-contrived (why should the heroine's husband be the very last to limp over the skyline after an agonizing wait?)

does not diminish its poignancy. CLAUDETTE COLBERT does very

well as Mrs. Keith, and there is an interesting reappearance of SESSUE HAYAKAWA in the part of a Japanese colonel with civilized feelings.

The reactions of the audience at the first public showing of *The Red Danube* (Director: GEORGE SIDNEY)—and, indeed, the very size of the audience, at eleven o'clock in the morning—suggested to my mind that most of the people there had come either because they liked the novel (by BRUCE MARSHALL) or because Catholic publications had let them know that the film was one they ought to support. This was not merely an anti-Communist audience, alert to appreciate every hit against Communism; it was an audience alert to greet with amused

approval every debating point made by a Mother Superior (ETHEL BARBYMORE) against professed unbelievers. Ostensibly the story deals with troubles of conscience among British occupying forces in Vienna in 1946 and 1947, where a Colonel (WALTER PIDGEON) gloomily tries to carry out his duty according to international agreement by turning over to the Russians, for repatriation, Soviet citizens who want to stay where they are; but it is decorated and indeed slowed down by theological discussion, conventional romance and would-be cheerful by-play, and the one or two glimpses of something like authenticity in the miserable state of the refugees seem out of place in such a mixture. There are good performances, notably LOUIS CALHERN's as a glowering Russian colonel, and the picture is entertaining enough for the moment, but it has no real value.

## Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Among the London shows, *Morning Departure* is outstanding; I shall write about it next week. *Bicycle Thieves* (11/1/50) still heads the "must" list.

Most interesting releases are *Golden Salamander* (15/2/50), a well-made thriller, and *Your Witness* (8/2/50), amusing Yank-in-England stuff on the framework of a murder mystery. RICHARD MALLETT

impressively well. But it's regrettable clear that some of the publicity for this film is aimed at customers on the very lowest level, the people who want sensational sadism. The scenes that give an excuse for the lurid posters are brief and unimportant, and it is sad to think that many who would enjoy the picture will be kept away by the belief that they typify its general tone. It has been conscientiously made ("wherever possible, in Borneo in the exact locales") and it is well acted; I don't really see how the story could have been done more effectively. The main difficulty is fundamental: how to give an adequate impression of the slow, grim, wearisome passing of time, in a scene that changes very little, and where the main pre-occupations of the women in the prison camp—food, outwitting the guards, catching a glimpse of their menfolk, finally just the determination to keep alive—are so simple and unchanging. The film hardly succeeds in making one feel this

*[The Red Danube]*

## Eternal City

Colonel Nicobar—WALTER PIDGEON

*[Three Came Home]*

## Temporary Habitation

Colonel Naga—SESSUE HAYAKAWA  
Agnes Keith—CLAUDETTE COLBERT



## THE WIND AND THE RAIN-GAUGE

SOMETIMES I wonder whether one half of the world quite realizes how the other half lives. To hear some people talk you'd think the rainfall records of the Meteorological Office kept themselves, whereas, in fact, they are the direct outcome of the selfless labours of hundreds of observers (unpaid) like myself. I am writing this brief account of my work because I want to make sure that I am not being taken too much for granted.

We observers find our own equipment, every scrap of it, which consists (in my case) of a rain gauge, a graduated measuring cylinder and a number of jam-jars. Every morning, punctually at nine o'clock (Greenwich Mean Time), whatever the weather, I am out there in the garden, bent low over my gauge. I remove the funnel, extract the container and carry it carefully to the porch where the graduated cylinder is kept. The precipitation (we observers, like other scientists, have our little terminological foibles, you know) is poured into the cylinder and measured. Not a drop is wasted.

The reading is then memorized and remains uppermost in the mind throughout the walk back round the house to the kitchen where it is entered up in the appropriate column of the Register of Rainfall.

Simple, you may say; but the sailing is not always quite as plain as this outline of my duties suggests. What happens, do you think, when the measuring cylinder is blown from its perch in the porch during a south-westerly gale of force ten and smashed to atoms on the rockery? I can assure you that any observer who found himself in this predicament and tried to *guess* the precipitation would soon be in trouble. Happily, such despicable conduct is never encountered nowadays among accredited observers: we have not had a member struck off the rolls for half a century.

No; when a measuring cylinder is broken we resort to jam-jars and mathematics. If the diameter of the funnel of a rain gauge is eight inches, then its effective catchment area is of course  $\pi \times 16$ , which is con-

siderably in excess of the cross-section area of the ordinary jam-jar. It follows that any reading made (with a ruler) of rain decanted into a jam-jar must be corrected arithmetically by a simple proportion sum.

The calculations usually begin in the margin of the Register of Rainfall and then wander off across the wallpaper round the service-hatch to the gas-stove. For instance, by lunch-time on February 3 I had used up about three square yards of wall-space to discover that the previous day's precipitation was 325.001 inches. After lunch I tried again, reached the third wall—just to the left of the calendar we got from the butcher's—and reduced the precipitation to a more reasonable 28.3 recurring. By nightfall I realized that the water in the jam-jar was subject to loss by evapora-

tion, so I pasted a strip of paper on the glass to mark the lowest point of the meniscus, and retired to bed.

Now it takes time for an observer stationed in a remote Surrey village to secure replacements of meteorological equipment; so on February 4 the precipitation was once more recorded by gumming a strip of paper to a jam-jar. And again on February 5 and 6.

The position now is that we have twenty-four labelled jam-jars in the kitchen cupboard and very few in reserve. Quite soon, when I have obtained my new graduated measuring cylinder, I shall pour water—just ordinary tap-water—into these jars to replace losses by evaporation; I shall transfer the fluid to the gleaming cylinder, read off the measurements and complete a month's entries in the Register of Rainfall at one go. In the meantime, however, I am desperately short of jam-jars. BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

## VALEDICTION

A DIEU, poor bear, whose smudgy eyes,  
whose ears of ebony fluff,  
swift as the feathered arrow flies,  
pierced hearts of granite stuff.

Loved as no other bear were you,  
our captive joy, our pride,  
who in sweet concrete confines grew  
to pandahood and died.

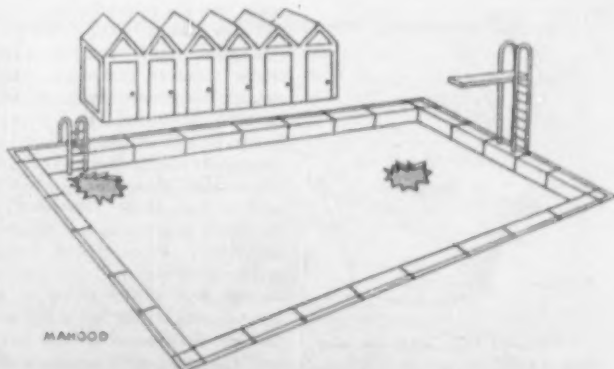
Bamboos we gave you, oh and love,  
so warm a love, so true;

we prized your dearness far above  
your value to the Zoo.

Yet on this day we call, we knock,  
our helpless children weep!  
Folding your furry feet you rock  
Into eternal sleep.

The earth revolves, and evil still  
is sanctified and blest,  
and man, it seems, will always kill  
the thing he loves the best.

VIRGINIA GRAHAM





## THE MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR OF FALCON ISLAND

EVERYONE who has had anything to do with soldiers, sailors or airmen will be familiar with this argument:

"Tomkins, why isn't my car (ship, aeroplane) ready?"

"Can't understand it, sir. It should be."

"I know it *should* be, but why isn't it?"

Something similar may well have happened on the day when the curious business of Falcon Island first became known. You can picture the Governor of Fiji (in his capacity as High Commissioner for the Pacific Islands) deciding in the course of one of his periodical visits to the Tongas that it would be nice to take lunch on Falcon. Cruising lazily westward from the Nomuka Group, you should reach Falcon in a couple of hours or so, unless the skipper sets course for Falcon Bank, off Disney Reef, which is quite a different thing some scores of miles in another direction. To-day, however, something is amiss. They have sailed since just after breakfast and already it is nearing lunch-time, and they have sighted nothing but a few shoal of flying-fish and a basking shark. The Governor, restive about his lunch, calls out anxiously to the captain of the little steamer:

"No sign of land yet, skipper?"

And the captain, scanning the horizon desperately through his powerful binoculars, answers "I

can't understand it, Your Excellency. It *should* be just here."

They cruise disconsolately around for half an hour more, until finally they decide to give it up, extemporize a lunch of flying-fish *Mornay* and *blêche-de-mer*, and turn back towards Nomuka.

That, at any rate, is how it *should* have been on the morning after Falcon Island disappeared into the sea. For that is the explanation: there was nothing wrong with the skipper's navigation; he was simply looking out for an island which had ceased to exist.

You might suppose that when an island which is under the protection of the British flag vanishes in this way something urgent would be done about it. The British Empire, after all, is not in such a stable position to-day that it can afford the loss of complete islands like this. When we lost Burma there were headlines in the newspapers and letters in the *Daily Telegraph*. But when we lost Falcon Island, what happened? Nothing. Not a word was said until, some months later, the Colonial Secretary of the time made a half-humorous reference to the matter in a speech.

It is true that, politically and commercially speaking, the loss was not a serious one. Falcon hardly shows on the maps; of the sixty-eight little dots I can count in my atlas inside the area of the Tonga, or Friendly, Islands, few are smaller than Falcon. Falcon rates an entry in no book of reference at my disposal, and the only information my correspondent at the Colonial Office was able to give me was that it now reposed beneath the ocean. (One statistic I have unearthed for myself: the 1935 edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* gives the area of the Tongas as two hundred and fifty-six square miles, whereas in the encyclopædia's *Book of the Year* for 1949 the figure is given as two hundred and fifty. From this I deduce with confidence that the area of Falcon was of the order of six square miles.) But, after all, it is possible that some of the forty-five thousand five hundred and

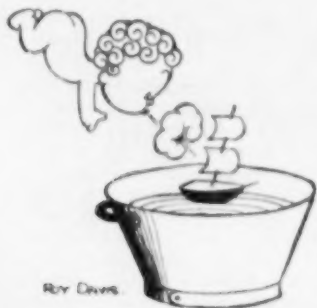
fifty-eight inhabitants of the Tongas lived on Falcon, or had friends there, or played golf on it, and it cannot have been pleasant for Salote Tubou, Queen of the Tongas, to lose six two-hundred- and - fifty-sixths of her dominion—more than two per cent—without a word of sympathy from the Government under whose protection her people have now lived for half a century.

Nor is Falcon Island an isolated example. In the very same year that we lost Falcon we lost Avocaire in the identical way. True, Avocaire is an elusive little island; indeed it appears to have been submerged at least once before, at the time when my atlas was being compiled, as it makes no appearance in its pages. Elusive or not, however, there is no reason why we should take its submersion so lightly. If fifteen thousand years ago the historians of the Mediterranean basin had told one another that they really weren't going to get excited about this business in Atlantis, the place was always in trouble somehow, last year it had been wolves and the year before the sea-god had turned the King's daughter into a fish—if people had talked like that an important and fascinating chapter of history would be missing even more completely than it is.

Civil Servants, no doubt keen to avoid any suspicion of carelessness with the Empire's territory, tell you blandly that these islands pop up and down quite often and there is nothing to worry about. If that is so the law of averages must provide that next time the responsible Minister makes an announcement on this subject he will be able to say that one or two islands have arisen from out the azure main to renew their allegiance to the flag.

Or at any rate it *should* do so.

B. A. YOUSU



"Henry! Get back into your bath at once."

## Infantile Delinquency

"Toddlers stole the show and carried off first and second prizes at the fancy-dress competition during a children's party in Frant Memorial Hall."

"Kent and Sussex Courier"





"Newly retired something-or-other . . ."

## THE RADIO DRAMATIST

XXV

SOME time ago a young radio dramatist of my acquaintance came to me for advice. He had been studying my "telescoping" method, he said, and had decided to attempt a radio play based on a combination of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* and *The Little Minister*. How should he set about it?

Now the telescoping method is by no means easy. (I well remember my early struggles with *The Green Hat* and *Urn Burial*.) I could see that the lad was burning to be at work, yet I feared that the thing would be too much for him, and that the attempt would end in discouragement and irritation. After some persuasion he agreed to abandon his design in favour of a short life of Burton. I advised him to consult his encyclopædia for material and promised to give him all the help I could. A few days later he brought me his opening dialogue, and gave me a rough outline of what he meant to do.

"Living at the same time as Burton, more or less,"

he began, "were Jonson, Dekker, Ford, Massinger and James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh."

"By your 'more or less,'" I suggested mischievously, "I infer that you hold no very high opinion of Burton's contemporaries?"

"I find," he went on, ignoring my little quip in his eagerness, "that Jonson frequented two taverns in particular—the Falcon at Southwark and the Old Devil at Temple Bar. I propose to open my play at the Old Devil. It was a hard-drinking age, and I think it not unreasonable to assume that sooner or later the law of averages would bring all my characters to this inn at the same time."

He thrust a few pages of foolscap towards me with a trembling hand. Glancing at the first, I read: "Ussher. Faith and bedad, Burton, it's the death of me ye'll be at the latter end!"

"Surely," I protested, "you are giving us a rather boisterous archbishop!"

"The point is," he explained, "that someone must poke fun at Burton's theories. Usher would have an Irish accent, and he seemed a natural choice. Burton must first appear as the butt for the Archbishop's incessant clowning: in this way I bring out the full flavour of his eventual triumph."

"The principal difficulty which occurs to me," I said, after some thought, "has to do with the time factor. I believe—and of course I may be wrong—that it was not until 1641 that Usher came to live in this country from Ireland. Now I am no stickler for accuracy in these matters. The dramatist who is for ever fretting over the possibility of error may end in never putting pen to paper at all. Nevertheless, we must face the fact that no joke could more properly be described as ill-timed than one aimed at Burton in 1641, since by that time there was, if I may so put it, no target. And I am afraid," I ended, feeling heartily sorry for him, I must admit, "that as far as Jonson, Dekker, Ford and Massinger were concerned, there was no audience either."

He made another attempt of course, but he had lost his confidence and bungled badly in his efforts to gather his characters in a natural way into Armagh Cathedral. In the end I said that I would myself work out an opening for the play, and that he could use it or not as he thought fit.

The idea that the play should open at the Old Devil was of course by no means bad. I decided to retain it, but remembering what my young friend had overlooked, that Burton drank no wine, it seemed to me necessary to invent some explanation of his presence in the tavern. After a few words from the narrator I opened the play in this way:

*(Shouts, laughter, oaths and the clink of drinking vessels.)*

*Jonson.* On my first page I write plainly my name and address, and underneath I generally put "Author of *Every Man in his Humour*."

*Donne.* Do you fasten the pages together?

*Jonson.* I do; and I so arrange my fastening and my margins that each page may be read without difficulty. *(Sound of door opening.)* But who's this?

*Burton.* I beg your pardon for intruding, gentlemen, but I am in urgent need of a wolf's liver. I wonder if—

*Ford.* What do you want with a wolf's liver?

*Burton.* It is a sovereign remedy against melancholy. I know of none better, unless it be bugloss. And I would say to you, sir, that you should put aside the bottle and restore your health with nature's remedies. A ram's lungs applied to the fore part of the head—

*(Shouts of derision and clink of drinking vessels.)*

*Jonson.* We will apply no ram's lungs at the bidding of a beardless boy!

*Narrator.* But there was that in young Burton which would not be abashed by the ridicule of his fellows, and later in the evening—

*Burton.* I tell you, Donne, I know I am right! Fuliginous vapours in the skull—

*Donne.* Yes, yes, Burton, I am on your side; but you'll have a hard fight, lad, a hard fight!

*Narrator.* And a hard fight it was! But Donne had taken a liking to the burly young student. He quietly threw his weight into the scale, and with the passing of the years—

*Burton.* Oil of nenuphar, rosewater, rose-vinegar, of each half an ounce, with as much virgin wax as a nut, anoint your temples with some of it—

*A Voice.* Vicar of St. Thomas!

*Burton.* St. John's wort gathered on a Friday in the hour of Jupiter, sacks of henbane, hares' ears—

*A Second Voice.* *Anatomy of Melancholy* published!

*Burton.* Treacle in winter, unicorns' horns, hellebore, irrigation of the head with water-lilies, lettuce, violets—

*A Third Voice.* Rector of Segrave!

*Narrator.* Rector of Segrave! Let us renew our acquaintance with Burton in the quiet rectory garden, where, on a summer evening in 1632, we will find him busily planting out his mandrake cuttings—

It may be that my young friend found it difficult to admit another's success where he had failed: at any rate if I expected thanks for my trouble I was disappointed. He made a silly quibble about my allusion to Burton as "burly," and pointed out that Jonson's taunt of "beardless boy" implied that Ford (nine years Burton's junior) was at the time too young for over-indulgence in wine to have done much damage.

I made no attempt at expostulation. The work was its own reward.

T. S. WATT



"Another new disease discovered—why can't they concentrate on useful things?"



### THE OLD HEATHEN KING

**H**E was a jolly old heathen King  
And I was a Christian slave;  
He knew how to dance and he knew how to sing,  
But he didn't know how to behave.

I taught him French and I taught him Greek  
And I taught him the rule of three,  
And I showed him the proper way to speak  
To a lady such as me.

I taught him the use of forks and spoons  
And how to eat humble pie,  
And dressed him in sable pantaloons  
And a shirt with a sober tie.

I stopped him from climbing on the roof  
With the son of the Grand Vizier,  
And I broke his bottles of over-proof  
And drained his barrels of beer.

He isn't as gay as he was before,  
And the Court's as dull as a tomb,  
But at least he always opens the door  
When a lady goes out of the room.

R. F. LISTER







## A LAMP SHINES BRIGHTLY

Toc H



**R**ATHER difficult to define, Toc H, not because it is in the least nebulous or negative, but because it has taken such particular pains to remain a living movement, to avoid the rust that can eat away a too-fixed objective. Last year its twenty-ninth

Annual Report opened with this over-modest statement:

"Toc H is not a large or influential body. It is still small, most conscious of its failings, ready to be reformed, seeking improvement. It minimizes what it does for men, to whom it whispers that the struggle for existence may be dull, but the struggle for existence of others is the happiest of all hobbies. Unpaid and unpretentious men and women, not only decent but (at times) amusing, are here on guard for God and for their neighbours, in some two thousand places. Memory, Faith and Hope are strong in them."

This was signed, quite sufficiently, "Tubby."

The beginnings were simple. In 1915 a soldiers' club was opened in Poperinghe, that was to become in the best sense a Christian inn. Called Talbot House after Lieut. Gilbert Talbot, killed a few months earlier, it was put in the charge of a young Church of England padre, Philip Clayton. He turned the loft into a chapel, using a carpenter's bench for

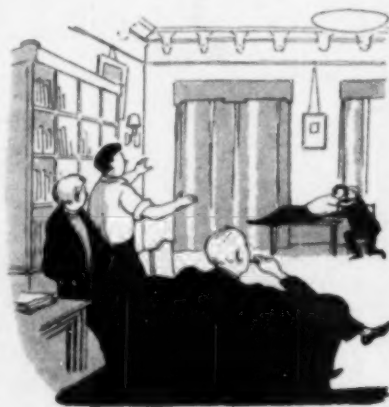


altar, and, having written over the door of his room "All rank abandon, ye that enter here" (which still appears in the hall of every House of Toc H), so amply demonstrated how successfully religion and gaiety could share the same roof that very soon officers and men flocked to the club, finding much comfort in the warmth of their host's highly original personality.

Talbot House at Poperinghe now belongs to Toc H, and is a place of happy pilgrimage and legend.

After that war many of the Flanders men believed its spirit would be needed no less in peace, and with what was left of the communicants' roll from the Poperinghe chapel a meeting was called in London. The agenda, headed *Operation Order No. 1*, was characteristic. It began: "The attack on the problem of re-opening Talbot House will be carried out by a Round Table conference, thirty in number, troops being drawn from Talbotousians, past, present, and to come. The attack will be covered by a creeping barrage of expert Londoners. A section of Clerical Tanks will co-operate." From that meeting the vanguard went quickly into action. Since there was already a Talbot House Settlement in Southwark, initials were adopted, and translated into the signaller's Toc H. Fellowship and service were declared the two basic aims, and beyond that Toc H was to be undenominational, classless and open to all, whether ex-servicemen or not. From these ideals it has never swerved. How deeply they appealed was proved by the almost miraculous rapidity with which the movement, though short

of staff and money, spread through the country. In 1920 the first residential hostel, Mark I, was opened in London, and others soon followed. Branches sprang up, even in remote districts. Empire tours by Tubby Clayton took the infection, as he likes to call it, overseas. In 1922 a Royal Charter was granted, and in the same year the Women's Section that now flourishes started out. By 1939 there were over twenty Mark Houses, and fifteen hundred branches; and during the



last war a great chain of Toc H clubs recaptured the spirit of Poperinghe on every British front.

It is much easier to understand the unique blend of idealism and common sense, of selflessness and practical optimism, that runs through everything to do with this extraordinary organization when you have met the man who has been,



and still is, its mainspring. Tubby Clayton is small, round, friendly, restless, impetuous, unselfconscious, and a natural showman. His heart is as large as the outsize pipe and spectacles which seem part of him. He is a scholar who is also a man of action, with a sense of fun and of adventure that melts obstacles like magic. In the first war he won an M.C., in the second he insisted on going abroad as a padre in an oil-tanker. He lives for Too H, and for his parish of All Hallows. If I mention by name only him and Private Pettifer (his Flanders batman, nicknamed "The General" by the children of Poperinghe, and now the senior vice-President) out of many who kindly helped me with this article, it is because between them these two explain the fundamentals of Too H.

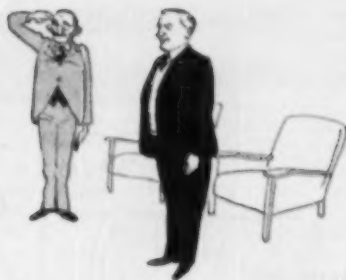
What exactly does it do? Well, the simple answer is, good works; but good works offered and accepted unconventionally in friendship and not in any dreary spirit of patronage. It is a layman's movement,



though the background of religion is solid and a padre is usually an active member of the branch. Any man from sixteen upwards can belong, after a period of probation. If he wishes, he can live cheaply and well in one of the Mark Houses (which also accept non-members); but whether his branch is resident or not he will be expected

to attend a weekly meeting at which some form of service will be allotted to him by an official called the Jobmaster. It may be library work in a sanatorium. It may be part of a collective effort such as that of a branch in Australia which brought in the harvest for a sick farmer. It may be almost anything. In addition to the Jobmaster, each branch has a Pilot, a kind of elder statesman, these and the rest of the Committee being elected by ballot. So far as possible the branches are left by Too H H.Q. in London, and by the Area Organizers, to run their own affairs. Some have acquired houses, but I heard of one which meets in the waiting-room of a country station after the last train has gone. All are a complete cross-section of class and occupation. Nobody is called "Mr." in Too H. It is a democracy without bureaucrats, a powerful antidote to the press-button mentality and the herd-movements of a mechanical age. But younger men are harder to attract than they were. Fifteen years ago Too H had too many youngsters; now the reverse is the case. Recruits are more easily found away from large centres, though a member from a colliery area told me of six healthy branches in which managers, trades-union leaders and miners meet in a harmony that is reflected, as the National Coal Board admits, in record figures of production.

At the core of Too H is a piece of symbolism as simple as it is moving, the Ceremony of Light. Each proven branch has a Lamp of Maintenance, lit at every unit meeting in a darkened club-room. In this



brief ritual Too H dedicates itself afresh.

Once in the wake of Tubby Clayton you are swept far and wide. Mr. Punch's Artist and I looked in with him on a house, near his stronghold by the Tower, in which young officers of the Merchant Navy are living while they work for their exams. This was an affiliated club, not strictly Too H, but its welcome was unmistakable. We went on to a very cheerful supper at a Mark in Putney, and watched the rehearsal of a home-brewed play that cocked a shrewd snook across the Iron Curtain. And later, our score in cups of excellent tea mounting alarmingly, we finished up at a Mark about two and a half off-drives from the Oval. As always seems to happen in Too H, we found ourselves immediately accepted by delightful and spontaneous hosts who talked well on all manner of subjects. Somebody once called it Everyman's Club, and this is not a bad description. Too H has the rare secret of natural friendliness that is neither sentimental nor hearty. The spiritual values which are its essence are too real to be obtruded, and there is nothing unctuous in its life.

It is a great idea, that has marvellously been made to work.

ERIC KEOWN





*"I believe the glass bottom is to enable you to watch the television while drinking."*

### MARCUS'S PREFAB

A CERTAIN crampedness is one of the disadvantages of the modern house, and in our own home the space problem once again cropped up when we foolishly bought a vegetable locker without measuring the kitchen first.

"It looked so much smaller in the shop," said my wife apologetically.

"It's long, but at least it's low," I said. "It would go under the kitchen table."

We glanced at one another guiltily. Under the kitchen table is where Marcus, our St. Bernard, spends his waking hour and his twenty-three sleeping ones.

"He's too big for this little house," said my wife. "He ought to have a kennel of his own outside."

We had agreed on that a hundred times. Now the vegetable locker forced our hands.

"I'll go straight out and get a kennel now," I said.

At the ironmongers they tried to sell me what they called their O.S. kennel, and did not believe me when I told them I had a more than O.S. dog. So I went to a yard that made portable sheds. This time I did not ask for a kennel; I asked for a coalshed.

They sold me a wooden shed the size of a small barn, partitioned off into two compartments—the smaller at the back for coal, the larger at the front for logs; or, in my case, for Marcus.

It was erected that afternoon, and we called Marcus out to inspect his new home. Marcus was in a bad temper because he couldn't get under the kitchen table on account of the vegetable locker, and he had had to take his rest in the drawing-room, where there was no pleasant smell of food to sweeten his slumbers. He waddled grumpily out, and, being two-thirds asleep as well as stupid, failed to notice his shed and

walked into it and bumped his head. I was pleased to see how well the timbers stood up to it.

"Now he's out here," suggested my wife, "we'd better instal him. We shall never get him out again to-day."

We fetched rich foods and baited the interior liberally. And Marcus, who was lying down wondering why he hadn't got a headache—he was too stupid to understand that a St. Bernard's head is completely proof against headaches—cheered up and actually rose of his own accord and gambolled inside. When the shed had stopped rocking we shut the door on him as a temporary measure and left him to settle down.

For the first few days he was perfectly happy there. He had the garden at his open door if he wanted exercise, which he didn't, and there was this excellent, straw-upholstered shed in which a dog might rest

indefinitely without getting trodden on and grumbled at for being in the way.

It was some little time before he began to feel the pangs of loneliness at nights. He then resolved to move back indoors. He came over at bedtime and sat on the veranda and pressed his nose to the French windows, and tried his pathetic look on us. No animal in the world has such a pathetic look as a St. Bernard. Hardening my heart, I escorted Marcus back to his shed, and after that we locked him in every night. I should never have believed it could be necessary to lock a St. Bernard in.

Marcus now determined to break out when we were asleep, apparently not taking into consideration the fact that when he had broken out of his house he still had to break into ours. He chose the softest part to break out through, which was the straw. He spent the whole of one night laboriously raking it into a corner. When I opened his door in the morning I found him staring in a baffled way at the floor, which he had not realized lay under the straw.

After this effort he rested for a number of days. Then one night he began operations again. He planned to scratch and bite a passage through one of the walls, and with immense cunning he picked on the back wall, where his progress would be less obvious. I would not care to say how many nights he toiled at this, but the end came unexpectedly, and one morning I found him lying down in helpless indignation with a gaping rent in the partition and half a ton of coal on his head.

We got him out and brushed him clean, and mended the partition and put the coal back the other side. We guessed Marcus would be too disheartened to try another gool-break, and we were right. Instead, he experimented with the effect of nocturnal howling.

A St. Bernard is by nature a taciturn dog, and at first Marcus did not know how to howl. He made a peculiar mewing noise like a hungry kitten, and it wasn't till he had had a good deal of practice that we realized he was howling. Even then it had little nuisance-value, for

Marcus found howling such exhausting work that he always fell over, sound asleep, after a few minutes of it. If we had not known Marcus we should have been quite alarmed to hear his howling cut short by the thud of his falling body.

Eventually, he gave up all attempts to regain his status as an indoors dog, and resigned himself to his cruel fate. My wife and I congratulated ourselves on our firmness.

"He's a dear old dog," said my wife, "but it is a relief not to have him about the house. He's so big."

"He's much better off out there," I agreed. "Healthier for him altogether."

"I am so glad we've broken him of being in the house."

## POEM BY A FLAT-DWELLER

LET others tell of deeds of dought  
Or hymn the praise of Love;  
I'm going to write a piece about  
McNut, the man above.

McNut he is a mighty man,  
He weighs of stone a score.  
No carpet hath he, but a span  
Of loosely boarded floor.

From creak to creak, by night and day,  
He boundeth like a yak;  
And there are those beneath who say  
He doth it in a sack.

He hath a cupboard big and wide,  
And 'tis his merry whim  
To tip it over on its side  
Until it falls on him.

A few nights later there was a touch of frost. I had been out late, and my wife, I knew, would have gone to bed. As I came up the path I felt the frost, and I thought of Marcus. . . .

He could sleep in my study. I could get up first in the morning and have him out in his shed again before my wife was down. She would never know.

I tip-toed to his shed and opened the door softly.

"Marcus, old boy!" I whispered to the dark bulk inside. "Come along, then—come indoors, poor old lad!"

No response. I struck a match. I was talking to the vegetable locker.

McNut he laugheth like a hen,  
He cougheth like a snipe,  
He bringeth down the ceiling when  
He knocketh out his pipe.

He playeth on his gramophone  
Four pieces: "On Your Toes,"  
"The Cornish Rhapsody," "Alone,"  
And something no one knows.

He hath of friends a goodly throng,  
Huge men on roller-skates;  
Three times a week they come  
along  
To help him break his plates.

Such is McNut. I write no word  
About his radio,  
Which sounds like any other board  
By anyone below. ANDE





## AT THE PLAY

*The Purple Fig-Tree* (PICCADILLY)  
*Man of the World* (LYRIC,  
 HAMMERSMITH)

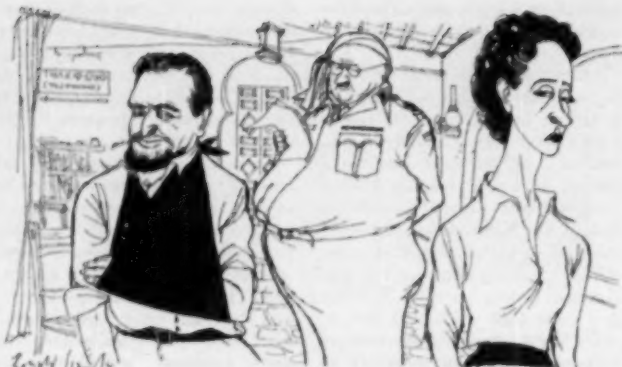


ANY conscientious guide book to the inns of Europe, classified not for cooking but intrigue, the entry of *The Purple Fig-Tree* would go thus: "Patriots betrayed at all hours. Excellent sport in the gun-running season by arrangement with the management. Stabbing-through-the-arras a speciality. Mock funerals à la carte. The famous climbing hysteria blooms all the year round." There is no lack of liveliness in this corner of a Greek mountain town ravaged by war and a prey to archaeologists. The proprietor is a leery villain with a sinister tenderness for canaries, the telephone-girl a multilingual aristocrat whose deep sense of her own tragedy does not prevent her from spiking others' marriages; the village coffin-maker, full of dark revenge but yet not quite so full of it as his crazy son, has a priceless statue for surreptitious export. And the military lurk, with pencils



*(Man of the World)*

Traitor  
 George Bernard—Mr. ROGER LIVESLEY  
 Guard—Mr. DUNCAN LEWIS



*(The Purple Fig-Tree)*

## Interrogator

Jacques Breval—Mr. JACK HAWKINS; Colonel Coumbaras—Mr. ANTONY HOLLES  
 The Countess—Miss MARGARET RAWLINGS

sharp as their questions. A charming French sea-captain, dropping in for some fun, is more than sufficient to ignite so much human explosive. The village doctor can scarcely stitch fast enough to keep pace with the wounds.

MR. GEORGE RALLI has given his play the glossy quality of a well-mixed story for a magazine, and it makes correspondingly little demand on the emotions. But its slick skimming of the surface is not without a kind of brick wit, and there is colour in the acting. I don't think Miss MARGARET RAWLINGS is altogether happy at the switchboard, but no one can suggest frozen fires more sombrely. Mr. JACK HAWKINS seems born to be the Frenchman, and Miss VALERIE WHITE shines as an American girl taking hard knocks with a smile. An outstandingly good set by Mr. EDWARD DELANEY seems to be flooded with sun and garlic.

I start, I confess, with a bias against Napoleonic captains of industry who consider international financiers to be the natural nobles of the earth; and nothing about Mr. C. E. WEBBER's *Man of the World* makes me sink any part of this bias. Nor am I taken in for a moment by the claim of this booming simpleton to be doing good while he is ruthlessly moulding mankind to fit his adolescent dreams. More interesting,

however, is Mr. WEBBER's apparent belief in the creature. He tells the story of his two marriages, his cosmic struggles, his imprisonment as a traitor and his transfer to an asylum as if *Bernard* were in truth a colossus. This I find tedious, and not less so because of Mr. WEBBER's habit of darting about in time, which adds confusion where it is already piling up on a cumbrous multiple set. And yet his play has warmth and imagination to a degree suggesting that if only he would begin at the beginning, and discard tricks, something good might come out of him.

His stupendous windbag is given a certain authority by Mr. ROGER LIVESLEY, and sometimes a sort of bewildered pathos; it would be difficult to do more. There is a beautiful performance, all too brief, by Miss URSULA JEANS, and as the elderly secretary who loves *Bernard* Miss WYNNE CLARK wonderfully echoes middle Europe. Such an imbroglio isn't a fair test of a young producer. Mr. KEN TYNAN, down from Oxford with a reputation, must please show us some more.

ERIC KEOWN

## Recommended

RING ROUND THE MOON—*Globe*—Fascinating production of Fry's translation of Aboult.

BLACK CHIFFON—*Westminster*—Flora Robson superb in good family drama.

FLOWERS FOR THE LIVING—*Duchess*—Kathleen Harrison in the slums.



"Lohengrin"

OUR national troubadours, the Covent Garden Opera Company of about two hundred souls, accompanied by a train-load of scenery and ancillary properties, have left London to give the citizens of Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and Edinburgh a taste of their quality in eight operas from the current repertoire—*The Magic Flute*, *Aida*, *Traviata*, *Figaro*, *Lohengrin*, *Madam Butterfly*, *Peter Grimes* and *The Olympians*. The interest of their visits for the inhabitants of these cities will doubtless be heightened by the knowledge that they have cost the Exchequer £145,000 in the past year, or *1d.* for every man, woman and child in Britain. Coming on top of food subsidies and Government largesse in the matter of wigs and false teeth this is an awesome thought.

On the whole, however, once you have recovered from the initial shock, it is well worth while to buy a ticket in order to see what they have done with the *1d.* extorted from you willy-nilly. It isn't all uniformly good, of course, but things are not necessarily perfect, even when subsidized. On the other hand, neither is the picture all black. The older war-horses in the repertoire



"La Traviata"

## AT THE OPERA

Covent Garden on Tour

receive a feed of oats from time to time in the shape of distinguished guest artists to revive the principal rôles, and no one can say that recent new productions have been without interest.

The best of the new productions, and the one most deserving of a handsome share of farthings, was undoubtedly *Lohengrin*, and this can be confidently recommended to the North. The production is by OTTO ERHARDT, who knows the score thoroughly and misses none of the points in it, while from the musical point of view it reaches a high level. The last performance of *Lohengrin* in London was quite outstanding; and not often do we hear anything more unearthly beautiful than the music of the vision of the Grail as it floated up into the darkened theatre and hung in the vibrant silence of a crowded house. SYLVIA FISHER's *Elsa* is perhaps a little stiff; none the less she sings nobly and convinces one of the reality of *Elsa's* mystic visions. FRANZ LECHLEITNER is a fine heroic tenor, whose *Lohengrin* is satisfying both to the ear and the eye, while the singing and acting of ROSINA RAISEBECK as *Ortrud* and TOM WILLIAMS as *Tetramund* make for a well-balanced performance.

*Madam Butterfly*, the last new production, is also going North. For us it was a disappointment. ELISABETH SCHWARZKOPF was an accomplished, *rusée* *Butterfly* hopelessly at odds with PUCCINI's helpless, trusting heroine, and gave the impression of being well able to take care of herself. SOPHIE FEDOROVITCH devised for this production a Japanese house like a moth's wing, a garden full of white cherry-blossoms, and the dinkiest little hat for *Butterfly* to wear for her wedding to *Pinkerton* (a rôle in which KENNETH NEATE is most engaging). It was the prettiest setting imaginable. But—and this is the acid test—we do like to have a good cry over *Madam Butterfly*. We like to take home at least two damp hankies. Miss SCHWARZKOPF did



"Madam Butterfly"

not make us shed a single tear. Our evening was a failure.

If the season is reviewed as a whole, there is one section of the company that stands out as being eminently farthing-worthy—the chorus. This cohort of seventy stalwarts officered by DOUGLAS ROBINSON is always efficient, well-rehearsed and on the spot. Whether they are East Anglian fisher-folk, Parisians of the Third Empire, Egyptians, Sevillans or priests of Isis it is all one. With the orchestra it is otherwise. They are temperamental folk. Sometimes, as in *Lohengrin*, they play like angels, and sometimes like inhabitants of quite another place. Still, they deserve a farthing or two. We will not strain at gnats.

Neither will we swallow camels. We would cut off all supplies to the partnership that produced *Salome*—the Gorgonzola landscape, the skeletal umbrellas, the Punch-and-Judy costumes. Luckily the rugged North is to be spared these.

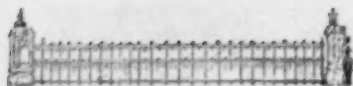
### Highly Recommended

*La Traviata* (Sadler's Wells). A new and delightful production by JOAN CROSS with designs by WILLIAM CHAPPELL and a *Violetta* of real charm in MARJORIE SHIRES.

D. C. B.



"Carmen"



## IMPRESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT



Wednesday, March 1st

When the Prime Minister skipped nimbly into his seat, his supporters, squeezed uncomfortably into the benches behind him, rose and cheered lustily. A moment later, Mr. CHURCHILL walked, with slow and dignified tread, to his seat, and his followers, crowded into the benches behind him, rose and cheered lustily.

So far, all very normal—even if it was a little startling at first to see all the benches on the Opposition side full of Opposition M.P.s, and without the last Parliament's usual quota of Displaced Persons from the Government benches. Everybody in this newly-elected House of Commons went on talking, exchanging experiences at the poll, congratulating on big votes, explaining away small ones.

It was not perhaps surprising, in view of their tiny majority, if Ministers were a chastened, but not depressed, look. Nor was it astonishing that the Conservatives, to a man (and woman), looked pleased, for they had many recruits.

Fiercest limelight was on Mr. MAURICE WERN, newly-appointed Minister of Food, whose quick-changes from one capacity to another in the Palace of Westminster, have dazzled onlookers. Not so many years ago he was there as a Party official. Then he bobbed up in the Press Gallery and the Lobby as a leading journalist—and one of Parliament's Home Guard. Then—hey presto!—he was on the Floor of the House—and Chairman of the Government M.P.s. And now—there he sat on the Treasury Bench, a Cabinet Minister, a Right Honourable Gentleman, and the holder of the most-discussed job in the Government. Crowds of political foes rushed to congratulate the popular young Minister.

Mr. RICHARD STOKES, who used to enliven the proceedings in previous Parliaments as a critic,

has become Minister of Works, with the long periods of silence that involves. And Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN? Well, he stays at the Ministry of Health, ready, so it was said, for battles to come.

Suddenly, Brigadier Sir CHARLES HOWARD, the Serjeant-at-Arms, stepped alertly from his seat, sword-hilt in hand, and slammed the door with petulant violence, right in the face of General Sir BRIAN HORROCKS, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, who had come from their Lordships' House with a message. Just as the



### Impressions of Parliamentarians

Lord Walkden  
(Captain, Yeomen of the Guard)

newcomers to the House had decided that this piece of insubordination on the part of the Brigadier called for the immediate attention of the new Minister of Defence, Mr. EMANUEL SHINWELL, Sir BRIAN rapped sharply on the door and was admitted.

He announced firmly that the Commons were wanted in the Lords, to hear a message from the KING, and off they all trooped.

In the Lords, Lord JOWITT, the Lord Chancellor, announced that the KING wished the Commons to elect a Speaker—and back they all went again.

The moment they were settled down, Sir FREDERIC (ERIC) METCALFE, the Clerk of the House, rose and pointed to Mr. DAVID KIRKWOOD. That popular Member (newly back, to everybody's delight, from a long illness) proposed that Colonel DOUGLAS CLIFTON BROWN be elected Speaker. It was a little gem of a speech—just long enough, just bright enough, just

serious enough, just sentimental enough.

The proposal was seconded by Sir CHARLES MACANDREW, from the other side of the House, and then Colonel CLIFTON BROWN, following ancient tradition, "humbly submitted himself to the will of the House." There was no doubt about the will of the House, and his proposer and seconder advanced menacingly on the gallant Colonel, grasped him firmly by the arms and jerked him to his feet. The Colonel raised his clenched fist challengingly, but was borne, resisting (but not too strongly), to the Chair. There, he ceased to struggle and thanked the House for the honour they had done him.

Messrs. ATTLEE, CHURCHILL and CLEMENT DAVIES offered their respectful congratulations.

Thursday, March 2nd

Scarcely had the Speaker-elect, in bobbed wig, settled into his Chair when Black Rod

banged on the door again, summoning the Commons to hear, in the House of Lords, an announcement of the KING's approval of his appointment.

When this was read out Mr. Speaker promptly claimed the continuance of the ancient and undoubted rights and privileges of the Commons—a claim which His Majesty seemed to have foreseen, for he had provided the Lord Chancellor with a written reply, to the effect that he gladly granted all the rights and privileges sought.

Mr. Speaker bowed and went back to the Commons, changed swiftly into his robe and long wig, and took the Oath.

Then, with Government and Opposition leaders coming first, began the long and soporific process of swearing in all the Members, two or three at a time. The Lull, it may be, before the Storm. Or, on the other hand, perhaps not.



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*The Royal is sorry it can't offer any accommodation—so that isn't any good . . .*



*The Imperial hasn't a single room vacant—so that isn't any good . . .*

## NO SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE

APOLLO reined his horses in upon their Westward run: the Eastern counties lay behind, the Essex flats were dun; but every pane of glass was blind in Kew and Kensington from gazing on the trappings of the horses of the sun.

Before, there stretched the road to Bath, beyond, the Western seas; Apollo laid his lyre aside and took a moment's ease: blue grew the shadows on the Weald, and timeless, tranced stayed church and field, towns, towers and English trees: beyond, beyond the weary god the broad Atlantic's path o'er which his horses, fire-shod, ten times a million times had trod.

There floated over Notting Hill a single cloud-cigar, and, curbing in his horses still and leaning from his car, aloud upon the echoless air Apollo, smiling, spoke: "A muse is only a muse," he said, "but a good cigar is a smoke."

He struck a Vulcan match upon the offside golden tyre, and laughed, and shook the reins again, and, stooping for his lyre, he tossed the burning match from Heaven—and set the Thames on fire. R. C. SCRIVEN

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*The Metropole just says "full"—so that isn't any good . . .*



*and the Palace will be delighted to reserve for us whatever accommodation we may desire, and assures us of every possible attention to our comfort—so that can't possibly be any good either. . . ."*

## THE TONGUE THAT SHAKESPEARE SPAKE

**THE** Times reports that boys of sixteen to twenty are no longer reading *Robinson Crusoe*. I can report from my own observation that bus passengers are no longer reading *Functions of a Complex Variable with Applications*.

At least not on the top deck. I don't know about downstairs passengers; fares with great danes are not allowed downstairs. Downstairs passengers may still be reading it by the score. On top its popularity has slumped to nil.

He was a small eager man with a birdlike eye. I had never seen him on my bus before. He looked a little lost. His suit needed home care, and he counted out the three halfpennies for his fare with either difficulty or reluctance or with both. Then he started reading a book. It had one of those titles that stay with one for life.

Simple variables may be common enough on top of a bus, or complex constants. But to plunge into a subject which is both complex and variable while travelling at high speed down Kensington Church Street in a public conveyance struck me as unusual.

I thought a lot about the matter. I asked myself whether a complex variable had organs as well as functions and whether it had a central nervous system. Was it a psychological condition or one of those things that meteorologists say hover over the Shetlands? Or did the man earn his meagre living by applying complex variables to whatever one applies complex variables to?

He continued to lavish his three halfpennies daily on the bus-fare and made progress with the book. Not very fast. Three pages forward,

one page back each ride. Net gain, two pages per day.

One morning he didn't appear. I concluded that he had found a better investment for his three halfpennies in future or that he had stayed in bed because his suit had lost its final button. Or perhaps he had struck oil with his complex variables and now had his own Rolls Royce.

I needn't have worried. He reappeared after a week reading quite a different book, looking more a match for the world. I regarded him as a long-lost friend and spoke to him for the first time. I inquired kindly after his complex variables. He seemed surprised. "They are nothing to me," he replied with a complex variable foreign accent, "I buy that book to learn English. I finish it. Now I read *Robinson Crusoe*."



"Eh—I mean get the cave spring-cleanit."



## BOOKING OFFICE

## Some Autobiographies

**T**HE well-balanced man, that ideal of the educationist, is a valuable citizen and friend; but it is the unsymmetrical and narrow who win those glittering prizes by which the successful recognize one another. It is surprising how much of life the topline manages to ignore.

Mr. Neville Cardus scarcely notices the last forty years, including the two wars. His *Second Innings* is a loosely organized collection of memories of enjoyable moments in his past. Old cricketers, long forgotten concerts, books read in youth, Manchester as discovered in childhood are not only recaptured for present savouring but given priority of esteem merely because of their remoteness. At times his genuine gift for putting appreciation into words is marred by a softness and sentimentality which seem connected with his curious delusion that he is an old, old man. In his previous book he said that he was past middle age at fifty-two, and now, though still in the prime of life, he enwraps himself in an artificial senility which is comic and rather repulsive.

M. Maurice Chevalier is aware of nothing outside his job. His lack of political sense got him into undesired trouble during the war. His life story, *The Man in the Straw Hat*, is full of interesting detail about the steps by which French music-hall artists rise to stardom. It is frank on morals and money and avoids the trivial chatter about celebrities which fills so many theatrical autobiographies. M. Chevalier has been driven in his career by two motives: to avoid falling back into the hardships of the slums where he grew up, and to earn the expert approval of colleagues whose work he admires. He shows very little interest in people and does not seem observant, so that it is odd he should be such a good actor. It is also odd that, judging by this book, he does not realize what a good actor he is. All his discussion of his work concentrates on the low comedian side.

Miss Jane Gordon happily ignores most of the intellectual and aesthetic developments of her own lifetime. She has lived through an interesting period and it has made no impression on her. Only where it has had something in common with earlier periods has it affected her. This means, of course, that she has not ignored the basic themes of home, war and sickness but that she has missed a good deal which only her own period could provide. Her *Married to Charles* looks a preposterous book at first sight, but it has a cumulative charm. Most of the accounts of domestic trifles—evacuating parents in war-time, visiting smart night clubs, and very ordinary conversations with very ordinary friends—are not really worth preserving. They are suitable for casual letters to friends, not for solemn publication: yet this gives them a historical interest. Small beer about the 'thirties and 'forties is just as interesting as small beer about earlier times, provided it is recognized for what it is. Through the

eyes of Mr. Charles Graves' wife, herself a leading women's journalist, we see the West End of London during the rise of Hitler and then during the blitz. We follow the effort of maintaining a comfortable home, running a skilled and well-remunerated job and at the same time nursing children and, later, blitz casualties. We see a life which is possibly philistine but is certainly honourable. It is at least unusual to combine intense devotion to the world of the smart gossip-writer with equal devotion to a hospital.

*Private Army* by Lieutenant-Colonel Vladimir Peniakoff—better known as "Popaki"—is a description of intelligence and demolition work behind the enemy lines in the desert and Italy. It is very exciting and entertaining, the quirks of the author's character enlivening the account of his remarkable adventures. His frankly expressed dislikes, especially of the Guards and the French, his interest in his own psychology, his gifts for narrative and his panache make the book an obvious best-seller and a probable classic. His achievement in running a kind of private war of his own against a good deal of opposition on his own side depended on the power of excluding everything from his mind except the operations of his troop. He describes with puzzled honesty how everything gradually faded away except the job—family, the war as a whole, the eventual peace. R. G. G. PRICE

## Another Short Bates

In "The Cruise of the Breadwinner" Mr. H. E. Bates used the short novel form so surely that there was no reason to question its length; the story was satisfactorily complete, and he seemed to have said everything necessary to swell its drama. The brevity of *Dear Life* is more apparent. An intensely concentrated



account of a girl's introduction to violent and callous crime, it remains a fragment, full of tragic implications which the author's swift impressions must leave partly unresolved. But as the basis of a drably exciting film that would be half a social documentary no director could ask for a more evocative synopsis. Mr. Bates is extremely skilled in the capture of precise emotional states through the lean and rapid recital of action. Not for him the expository pause: the reader takes in character and feeling and colour in a single economical draught as he is swept urgently along by the drive of the narrative. This plunge into the underworld shows Mr. Bates still compassionate, but at his grimiest.

E.O.D.K.

### Seven Days' Plain Speaking

Mr. E. R. Stettinius, former American Secretary of State, sat at the President's right hand through the protracted discussions and even longer dinners of the 1945 Crimea Conference. He tells the story in *Roosevelt and the Russians*, a record designed to clear himself, and incidentally his chief, of the charge of having given away his country's interests across the table. He has no difficulty in showing that it was rather Uncle Joe than his very good friends Winston and Franklin who made comradely concessions—concessions that, could they have materialized in action, might have gone far to smooth the way to European peace. There is a curious suggestion in these pages, which tell of something near to frank disclosure of mutual suspicions, that after all Stalin may not be quite master in his own "Politburo." Behind him there may be something or somebody that he fears, even less favourably disposed towards Western civilization.

C. C. F.



"I see that chim's coming back."

### Derbyshire Retrospect

Although its handling is fictitious the outlook of *Changing Valley* is largely ethnological. Its theme is a Derbyshire village reconstructed with more science than imagination; and you are warned at the outset that the community as established in 1880 have their origins in the post-glacial period. Given this angle, there is little amiss and much to admire in Mr. Crichton Porteous's knowledgeable handling of their habits. His squires and farmers concentrate on prestige and cash. His young people are identified by equally powerful appetites, whose gratification on the tops of haystacks is only one of many bizarre local customs. A railway and even more disruptive forms of transport have their local repercussions. The first war shuffles the village pack and starts a new game. Only when Farmer Bellot applies to Squire Kirk for the site of a Methodist chapel, is Mosdych credited—by implication—with a soul. Yet a touch of Wesley might have fired a pyre that still awaits its spark.

H. P. E.

### A Piece of Land Covered by Water

*Roll Back the Sea*, by A. Den Doolaard, translated by Barrows Mussey, is a 412-page novel about the flooding of Walcheren in 1944 and the later reclaiming of that Dutch island, and it is also the story of men's love and pride in their own skill and the tale of a mighty battle against the sea. There is paragraph after paragraph of detailed technical description, written so excitingly that the reader is compelled to rush through the pages. There are small, perfect word pictures of the despair of men and beasts. There are swiftly-drawn characters, and there is the peaceful triumphing conclusion at the end of the race against time and tides. The most startling thing about this wonderful book is the way the author clarifies facts and makes the ordinary reader (to whom the theme might be easily as dull as dike water) appreciate the magic of the engineer.

B. E. B.

### Books Reviewed Above

- Second Innings*. Neville Cardus. (Collins, 12/6).  
*The Man in the Straw Hat*. Maurice Chevalier. (Odhams, 12/6).  
*Married to Charles*. Jane Gordon. (Heinemann, 15/-).  
*Private Army*. Vladimir Poniatoff ("Popoki"). (Cape, 15/-).  
*Dear Life*. H. E. Bates. (Michael Joseph 7/6).  
*Roosevelt and the Russians*. E. R. Stettinius. (Cape, 16/-).  
*Changing Valley*. Crichton Porteous. (Michael Joseph, 12/6).  
*Roll Back the Sea*. A. Den Doolaard. (Heinemann, 15/-).

### Other Recommended Books

- The Feast*. Margaret Kennedy. (Cassell, 9/6) Unobtrusively moral tale: of the people at a Cornish hotel, precisely the seven that most readers would have chosen for death are killed in an accident. Well written, ingeniously constructed, highly entertaining.  
*Food*. André Simon. (Burke, 15/-) Handsomely-produced, entertaining anthology in "The Pleasures of Life Series," very easy to read. Sixteen full-page plates, eight in colour, recall the great days of eating.  
*The Miraculous Barber*. Marcel Aymé. (Bodley Head, 9/6) Satirical novel about Paris in 1936; characters acridly observed, relationships complicated and irregular. Wit survives in the translation (Eric Button) of a book only superficially unifying.

# UNCONSCIONABLE TIME A-DIALLING

IT takes a very irritating man to do four irritating things simultaneously. For instance, Hackle. He bounced into my office at ten minutes to twelve on Saturday morning, put his wet hat down in my out-basket, whistled the "Harry Lime Theme" and demanded that I should find him an actress's phone number. Like a fool, I said I would ring up Freddie Lodestar and ask him; it is a weakness of mine that I cannot resist the temptation to impress people like Hackle.

"So you know Lodestar's number," said Hackle, not impressed at all (*five* irritating things). Lodestar is one of the eminent who have risen above having their names in the directory.

"I know someone who does," I said, and dialled stylishly with the end of my ball-point, easing myself subtly into my telephone personality—half Children's Hour uncle, half Foreign Office executive. "Ah," I said, "PLAgent 9322? Is Mr. Channell—?"

"East London Brick," said some ass, paused a second and hung up.

"Not there, eh?" said Hackle, helping himself to my cigarettes and matches.

I did not reply but dialled again.

"Ah," I said presently, "PLAgent 9322? Is Mr. Channell there?"

"Oh, no," said a feminine voice, fading and breathy as if speaking through a raffia mat. "He left a year last November."

"I see," I said with tolerance.

"Just a minute. I think I can—" The voice faded right out and I heard the old-fashioned receiver banging on its string.

"Washout, eh?" said Hackle. He began walking about with his hands in his pockets, whistling "All Alone by the Telephone" through his teeth. After some time I heard a scuffling at the other end.

"Yes!" I said. "Yes?"

"I thought I could smell something boiling over," said the woman. I suppose I must have forced a sympathetic snort, because Hackle asked me what the joke was.



*"We're waiting till it's all in colour, four times the screen, quarter the price, and programmes all day long."*

"My husband knows it," she said.

"Knows what?"

"Mr. Channell's number."

"Splendid."

"Only he's not here. Otherwise he'd tell you. People often ring up, and of course he tells them."

"Jolly good," I said. I don't know why I said that. "But naturally if he isn't there—?"

"Then they have to ring my husband's office. Captain Chicory." She gave me the Whitehall number on her dying breath.

"Drawn a blank, eh?" said Hackle. I ignored him.

The conversation with Captain

Chicory, if that could possibly have been his name (he announced himself as "A. Y. 4(b). D."), was difficult. My own end was now rather involved, but once the gallant Captain had the facts clear he was eager to tell me all about his early married life in two rooms off the Vauxhall Bridge Road; it was his way of leading up to an elaborately detailed account of how he had come to take Channell's flat, after which he invited my comments, my advice even, on the terms of his lease. At last ("Reading aloud to you from K.R.s, is he?" said Hackle) he said that he might give me a line on Channell, providing that his (the

Captain's) 1948 diary was still at the back of his drawer in the next room. It was. Right at the back. After some minutes I was in possession of Channell's business number, and we parted with many expressions of cordiality on both sides.

Hackle had now gone out, leaving a cigarette to expire acridly on the edge of my bookshelf. The FRAnge number *burr-burred* twenty-eight times before a pert girl, obviously brought back from halfway down the stairs, said "Wragge, Wisefoot and Channell at your service, good morning."

"Mr. Channell, please," I said with charm.

"Don't come in Saturdays, and if he did he'd have gone this time of day."

"Thank you," I said with measured irony. "Might I have his home number?" I could tell that I had forestalled a metallic click by a split second.

"In the book," said the girl, and there was a metallic click.

Hackle, now returned full of coffee and inane comments, breathed down my neck. I told him, as we pored over columns of Channells, Channells and Channells, that I had heard Channell addressed as Beppo by his intimates. He at once put a finger on "Channell,

B.P.O." and said "Why didn't you look him up before, instead of wasting my time?"

I dialled the number grimly. A girl said in a giggly voice "Oh, you mean Beppo. Always makes me laugh—Beppo."

"Is he there?" I said.

"Oh, no. My dad and him changed numbers, didn't you know? It was all to do with the Post Office." She gurgled like a draining washing-machine. "So when my dad—"

I got her dad's old number at last. It seemed to give her rich amusement. Hackle, reading a private letter of mine with raised eyebrows, said "Why all the funny faces?"

When finally I heard Channell's voice I wasted no more time. It was the voice of a man taken away from an early and enjoyable lunch.

"What do you want Lodestar for?" he said.

"A friend of mine"—I looked at Hackle, now wandering round the room straightening calendars, and hoped I might be forgiven a black lie—"a friend of mine wants to ring up Tina Brullage."

"Let him get on with it," said Channell rudely.

"I thought Lodestar would know her number."

"Very likely."

"And that you would know his."

"I don't," said Channell.

"Don't hang up," I said.

Hackle's wanderings brought him to my elbow, which he patted playfully. "Getting warmer, old boy, old boy?" he said, and whistled a bit of "Ragtime Cowboy Joe." I suppose the panic in my voice had had some softening effect on Channell. At any rate he now said "Oh, well, if it's all that important. Look, I can put you on to a chap who knows the number of Freddie Lodestar's ex-wife's new husband. Is that any good?"

"Is it good?" I said. "It's perfect! Hang on a minute."

"Got it!" said Hackle. "Not before time."

"Over to you," I said, and pressing the receiver abruptly into his hand I took my hat and coat and left him.

It was just conceivable that he would still be there on Monday morning, but it was a chance I had to take. J. B. BOOTHROYD

5 5

### Hydrogen Bomb

"A PRETTY toy?"

The devil shook his head:

"I still prefer the human heart," he said. R. C. SCRIVEN



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**OLD GOWRIE**

TOBACCO

It is the sure, unhurried touch of craftsmen that destines Old Gowrie for the pipes of connoisseurs. Prepared by hand in the old fashioned way from the pure Virginia leaf, this benign tobacco is conducive to serenity of mind.

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HANDBAG!



**Clears  
Stuffy  
Nose...**

*Quick as a Breath!*

HOW ABOUT enjoying life even if you have a stuffy head-cold? Stuffy? You needn't be! For instant breathing comfort, wherever you go, just reach into your pocket or handbag for your little Vick Inhaler.

IT'S TINY—but loaded full of potent, nose-clearing medication. Now, unscrew the cap, and put the tip of Vick Inhaler right into each stuffy nostril in turn. Inhale deeply. Right away—quick as a breath!—your nose and head feel clear again! Try it!

USE AS OFTEN AS NEEDED




One thing about Spring is the suddenness with which it seems to happen. Lambs, daffodils, other people's newly painted front doors—there they are, overnight as it were.

You, of course, can look and feel just as fresh and new. A pair of excellent quality flannels makes a good start, and you may well need a new sports coat. We have many fine examples of both. You will also find sports shirts for greeting the Spring in, and some excellent brogues to carry you into the sunshine.

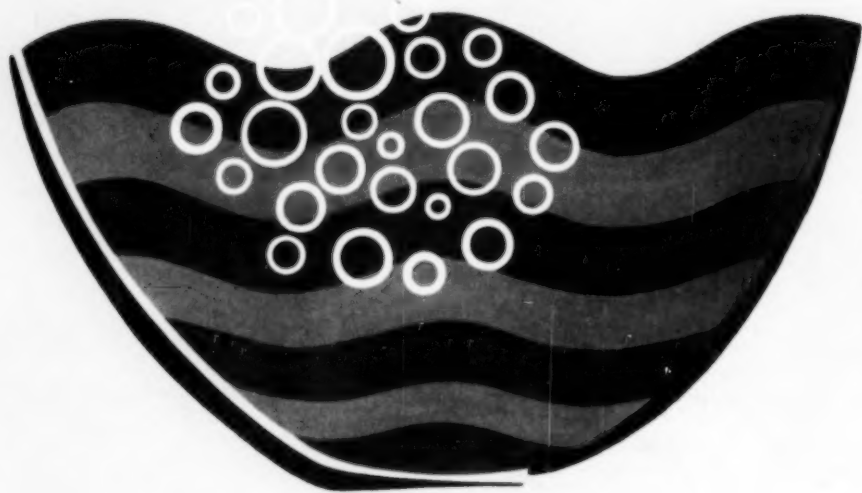
PRICES Flannel Trousers from 98.6 Sports Coats from £7  
Shirts from 31.6 Brogues from 99.9

*is just a part of the* **Austin Reed** *service*

LONDON & PRINCIPAL CITIES LONDON TELEPHONE: REGENT 6789



*sun-resisting & washproof*



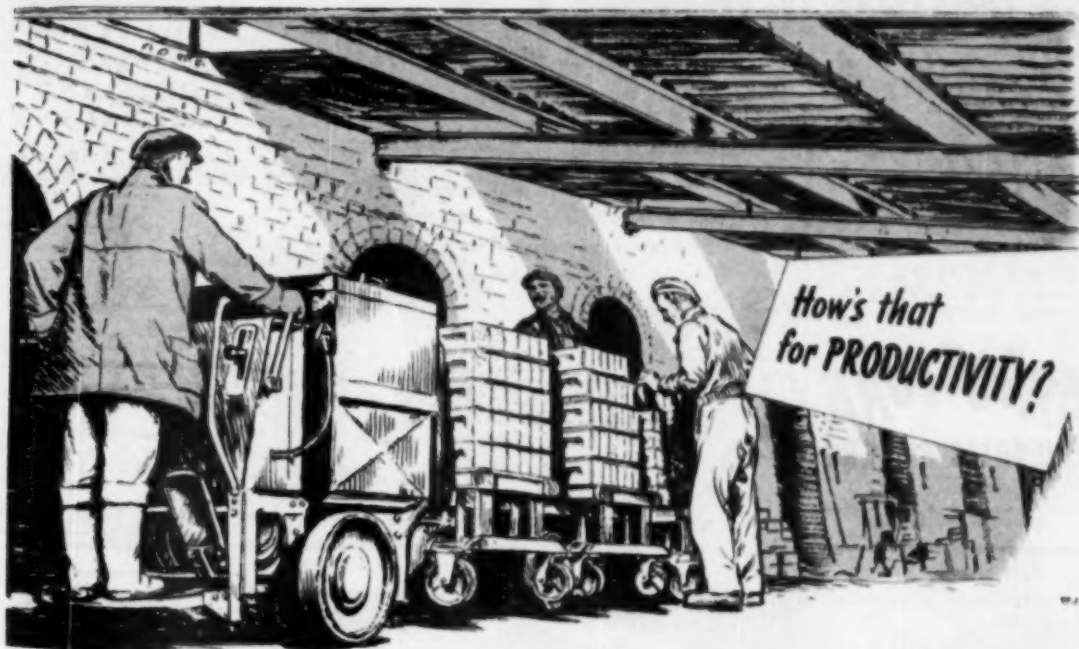
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He's doing the work of seven men—seven 'wheelers' who used to carry the bricks from moulding sheds to kiln. He—and the sturdy electric truck he drives—have cut man-hours spent on the job to one-sixth. Have ended wasteful delays. Have speeded production and lowered its cost. It's happening in factories and works all over Britain, in light and heavy industries alike. Electric trucks, silent, speedy, fumeless, easy to drive and cheap to run, are taking over the jobs of handling, stacking, carrying, loading and unloading. Men and women are being freed for production work. Costs drop, where management turns to 'electrics': production figures rise!

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**Exide-Ironclad**  
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aromatic  
bitters

*in your  
Straight  
Rum*

A DASH-OR-TWO  
MAKES A DELIGHTFUL  
DIFFERENCE . . .

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after the sweet, when you're feeling replete  
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When the waiter says "Sir, will you have a liqueur?  
Glen Mist—rare nectar and mellow"  
you say "Ça va sans dire" (Anglice "Hear, hear"  
or "He's a jolly good fellow")*

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**FINISH** of high-grade Cream and Black porcelain enamel.

**FUEL CONSUMPTION** is economical, less than 26 lbs. per 24 hours.

**HOT PLATES** provide for fast boiling or simmering.

**THE OVEN** is capacious and has controlled door hinges and a thermometer.

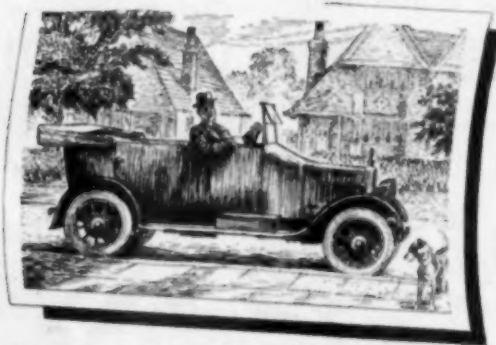
**AIR CONTROL** is easy to manipulate.

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Our famous Triplex Open fire grates are still available.



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*the year we bought our Slumberland!"*

Thousands who will buy Slumberlands this year have parents who bought Slumberlands when they first set up home.

A Slumberland lasts. That's what is so different about it. More so than ever with the non-utility Slumberlands you buy today—and their new exclusive "Ortho-Flex" springing. The resilience goes deeper.

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MATTRESSES

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You see more things at this most up-to-date of shows—from your ideal home and garden to the latest inventions to save you time and trouble. New furniture and fabrics. Food and cookery. Here you see new things first—all under one roof! Bring the family—there are toys, games and children's clothes and furniture, too.

**DAILY 9.30 a.m. — 9.30 p.m.**

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**ADMISSION 2/9 CHILDREN 1/9**

**MARCH 7—APRIL 1**

## **Special Features**

A walk round  
**THE VILLAGE OF IDEAL HOMES**—a visit to **THE NEW ZEALAND HOUSE**—a look at a **MODERN LAUNDRY AT WORK**. See **THE GOLD COAST COMES TO BRITAIN**—**GARDENS OF MUSIC & MOONLIGHT**—**FOOD FROM THE SUN**—**STEEL AND THE HOME**.



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The EVERBURN Unit fits your present ordinary grate. Whilst you sleep, when you are out, your fire keeps burning and your room stays warm.

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At will, a flaming open fire is yours, as always. The cost is 66/- tax free, and the EVERBURN guarantee ensures satisfaction.

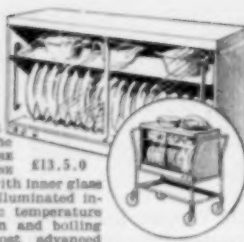
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★ With back-bolter grates you enjoy really hot water, night and day

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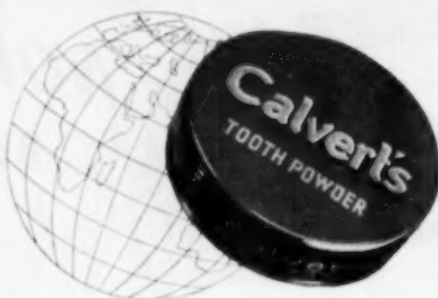


Here is the perfect combination for the perfect kitchen. The BELLING STREAMLINE Electric Cooker with inner glass oven door, and illuminated interior, automatic temperature controls for oven and boiling plates—the most advanced design yet produced. And THE BELLING Electric WARMING CABINET which heats and stores the plates, keeps meals piping hot, and dries the washing-up. Also available on Dinner Wagon. £15.0.0



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For four generations users agree that Calvert's does its job of cleansing supremely well, and very pleasantly too, thanks to a unique flavour. Have you ever tried Calvert's Tooth Powder? You should, and let your teeth show the difference.

# Calvert's TOOTH Powder

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PURE COFFEE

The finest blend with all the goodness, freshness and aroma vacuum-sealed.



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has the BUILT-IN LID!

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Made by Perry Bavan & Co., Ltd., Aston, Birmingham 6



Look well-groomed always, in fabrics marked



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WHAT makes Harpic such a joy to use is that it works overnight! And works quickly and thoroughly, too. Just sprinkle a little Harpic into the lavatory bowl last thing at night. In the morning, flush. Hey presto! The job's done!

Harpic sweeps right round that hidden S-bend at the back. Cleans . . . disinfects . . . deodorizes. Leaves the whole bowl glistening white!

**HARPIC** MADE SPECIALLY FOR LAVATORY CLEANING

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"I do like a dog  
with some life  
in him . . ."



Just say the word 'Walks' and he's off!



Dinner—and is he ready for it!

One Bob Martin's once a day will help to give your dog a rich blood supply, healthy bones and teeth, and the good, warm coat nature intended for him.

In balanced proportions, each tablet contains vitamins and mineral substances which supplement the diet of the domesticated dog, and are

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We're taking home some  
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cream to-day



"THE CREAM OF SALAD CREAMS"

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**JODHPUR BOOTS**

to measure  
(Personal fitting only)

A SELECTION OF LADIES' BROWN JODHPUR BOOTS (AS ABOVE)  
AVAILABLE FROM STOCK FOR IMMEDIATE USE. DETAILS ON REQUEST





'We have  
increased our  
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by 35% with  
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The MotaVeyor, a unique power conveyor of unit construction, shows impressive gains in productivity wherever it is used. Its great adaptability suits it ideally to most mass-production handling needs.

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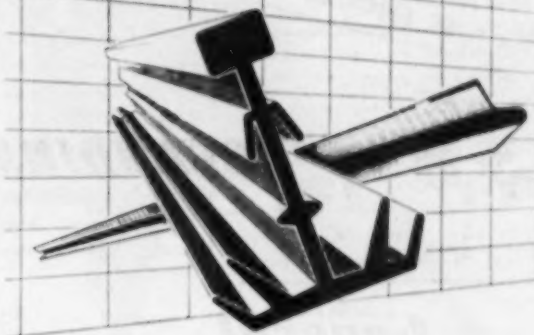
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**"No Name"**  
*Tobacco.*

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You take a cunningly shaped bar of aluminium alloy and a springy, folded strip of the same metal. Insert between them panes of glass. That, in essence, is the way to give any building a wall of glass. Or a window longer than the Queen Mary, and 50 ft. high, as in the Brabazon hangar at Filton.

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**Why Aluminex?** The reasons why the Architect, Eric Ross, F.R.I.B.A., and the Consulting Engineers, Brian Colquhoun & Partners, chose Aluminex for the Brabazon hangar can be seen from this brief comparison:

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| Maximum light for assembling the Brabazon.                 | Aluminex is slim, light, offers minimum obstruction to light.         |
| Must stand up to Atlantic gales.                           | Aluminex is strong; has tested gale resistance.                       |
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**Three Nuns****GOING UP TO TAKE IT DOWN**

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Look for the Medway Symbol



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*Issued by the British Insurance Association*

**Regain your former  
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**ARE YOU HAVING 'a bad day'?**  
This is often a sign that your system is running short of two essential nerve-strengthening, blood-enriching foods—phosphorus and protein.



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'Sanatogen' contains phosphorus and protein in easily assimilable form. For over 50 years hundreds of thousands of people have been finding that 'Sanatogen' gives them renewed health, strength and happiness—it will do the same for you! 'Sanatogen' is obtainable from all chemists. Prices (including tax) from 5/6d.

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**NERVE TONIC FOOD**

*The 'Sanatogen' Mixer, so popular with regular users, is again available (1/6d., post free) from Glenavon Ltd., Loughborough, Leicestershire.*

## CATARRH and BRONCHITIS

*are now being widely treated with*

***Lantigen 'B'***

**DISSOLVED ORAL VACCINE**

The introduction of Lantigen 'B' dissolved oral vaccine to this country has brought a new approach to the treatment of Catarrh and Bronchitis. Following a number of years' experience in Australia and Canada, Lantigen 'B' is now becoming widely acknowledged in Great Britain for its treatment of these two distressing ailments. In its own persistent and thorough way Lantigen 'B' provides a safe and reliable method of treating Catarrh and Bronchitis. Lantigen, being a vaccine, not only treats the disorder but stimulates resistance to the causative germs. Lantigen 'B' costs One Guinea per bottle, plus 4/6 Purchase Tax. Ask your chemist for descriptive Lantigen Leaflet.

*Taken like ordinary medicine*



LANTIGEN (ENGLAND) LTD., BAGSHOT, SURREY



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A DAY FOR FIGURE  
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*Simple Self-massage invention will soon  
have you looking and feeling years younger*

You can have a slim, trim figure—you can regain the light step of youth without wearing yourself out with physical jerks. Massage is the key—massage of the vital muscles of the abdomen, on whose strength and tone your figure, carriage and digestion depend. Now a simple self-massage invention—the Rallie Health Belt—makes it easy to give yourself the benefits of abdominal massage.

**READ WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY**  
"Ingenious appliance... affords gentle massage to the abdominal muscles" says *The Lancet*. "Should prove invaluable to the man or woman of middle age whose figure has begun to spread" says *The Medical World*.

**GLORIOUS FEELING OF WELL-BEING**  
A few minutes daily with your



*The pulling strands contract and relax the 'Rallie' Massage Apparatus alternately, exercising abdominal muscles, and massaging internal organs.*



*The 'Rallie' Massage Apparatus shown with the pulling strands extended. The device is for men and women of all ages.*

Rallie Health Belt gives you gentle massage that is wonderfully exhilarating—and every movement helps to tone and strengthen all important muscles, to restore a sagging waistline, to slim away unwanted flesh easily, naturally. The Rallie Health Belt is not a corset, nor an ordinary belt for constant wear. It is especially designed for abdominal massage and worn only while exercising. It is equally suitable for men and women.

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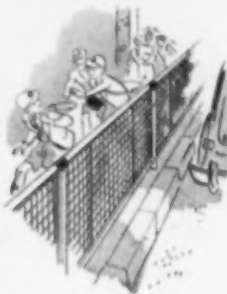
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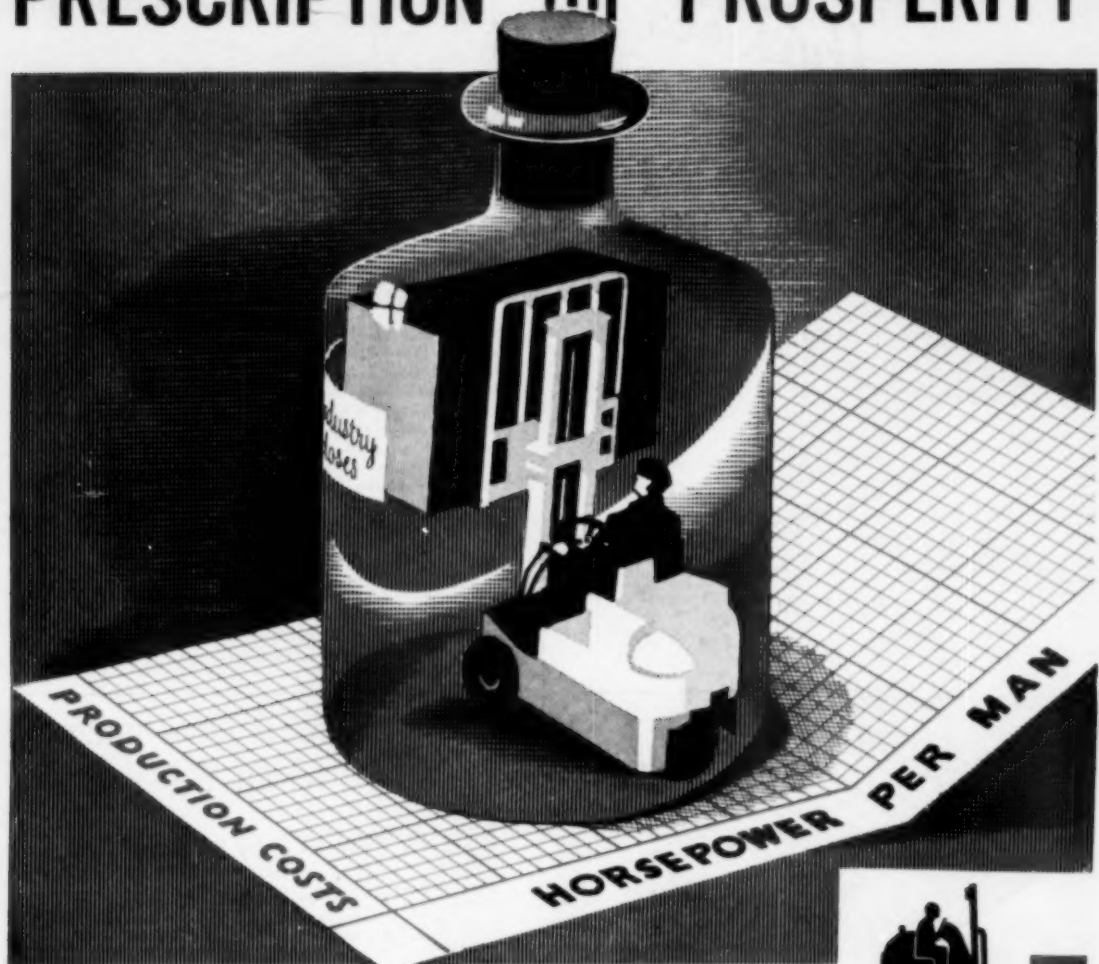
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